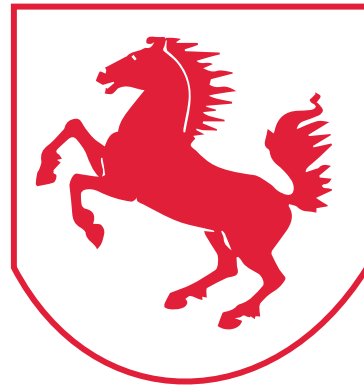


# STUTTGART Citizen



Vol. 46, No. 6

The Greater Stuttgart Community

Welcome Edition 2017-2018

## WELCOME to STUTTGART Special PCS-In Edition



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# Things to know about Stuttgart military community

## USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs

The U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart is a joint service military community composed of five installations in the greater Stuttgart metropolitan area.

Stuttgart in the state of Baden-Württemberg is in southwest Germany. There are 13 states in Germany and three cities that carry the same status as states. With a population of more eight million in the city and metropolitan area, it is the fourth largest metro area in the country. It is a thriving major German population center with a wide variety of industry and tourism. The annual Cannstatter Volksfest is the second largest festival in the world after Oktoberfest.

More than 20,000 U.S. military personnel, U.S. federal agencies, civilians and family member make up the garrison community working at Panzer Kaserne, Patch Barracks, Kelley Barracks, Robinson Barracks and Stuttgart Army Airfield.

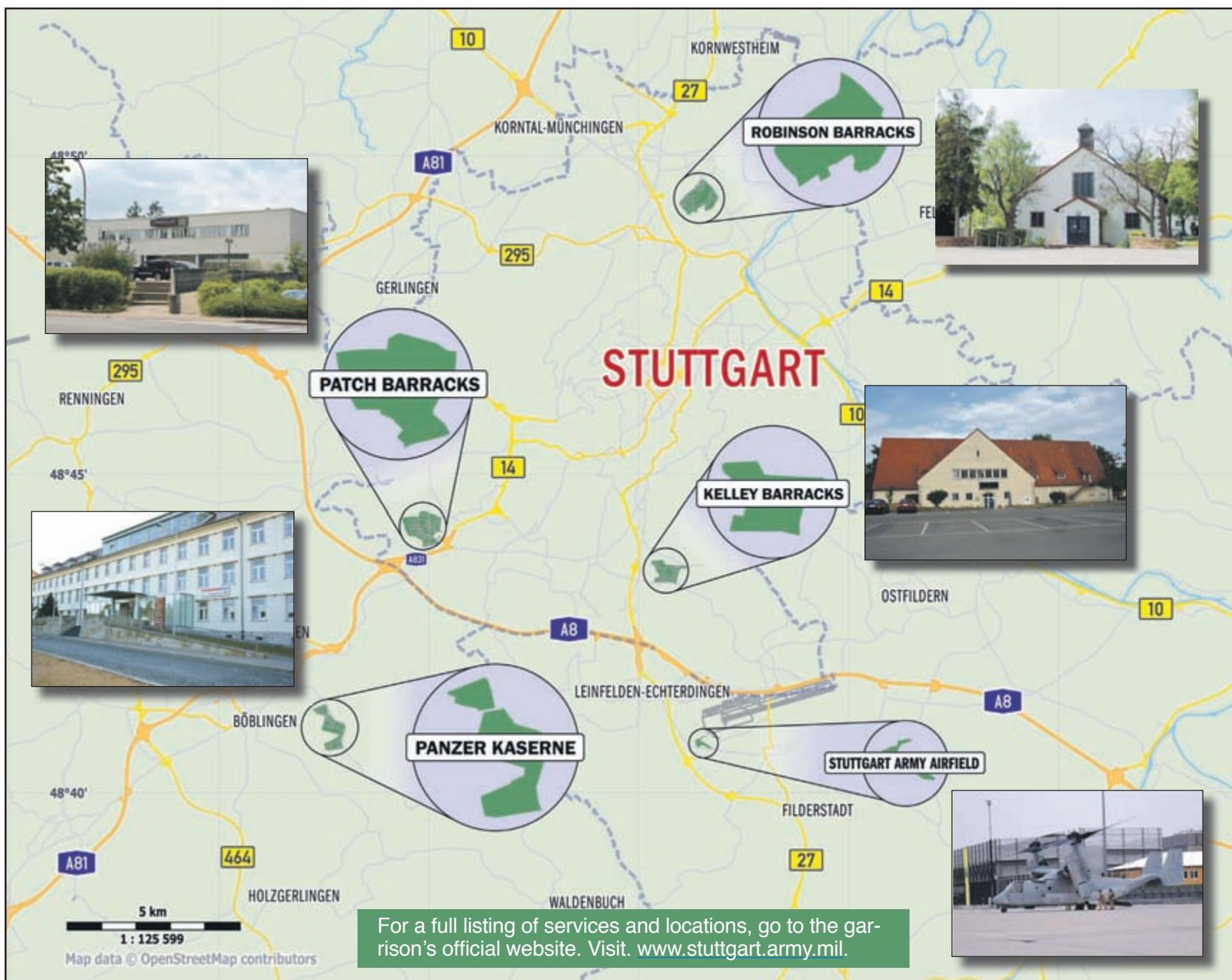
Panzer Kaserne, located in Böblingen, has the garrison headquarters where most of the in-and-out-processing customer service is done. It is home Stuttgart and Patch Elementary Schools and Stuttgart High School. The garrison's main Exchange, the Panzer Hotel and a small commissary are located here. Panzer Kaserne is where incoming personnel pick up their personally owned vehicles, have them inspected and get them registered; additionally, the Family & Morale, Welfare and Recreation's Auto Skills Center and the Exchange Car Care are here.

A short distance away along highway K1055, AKA "Frog Road" because of the signs warning drivers to be aware of migratory frogs crossing the road, is Patch Barracks in Stuttgart-Vaihingen. Patch is home to the U.S. European Command. The installation features Patch Middle School, the garrison's main commissary, a gas station and shoppette, movie theater and food court, car wash, Thrift Store and other services. Patch is one of the two main residential installations in Stuttgart.

Kelley Barracks in Stuttgart-Möhringen is home to U.S. Africa Command, the Stuttgart Legal Assistance Office, the award-winning Kelley Theatre, a commissary, gas station, the Kelley Club and a child development center. The more than 1,300 housing units at Panzer Kaserne and Kelley Barracks combined hold approximately 40 percent of the family housing units, and 50 percent of the unaccompanied housing.

Robinson Barracks, located in Stuttgart Bad-Cannstatt, is primarily a residential installation. Together with Patch Barracks, it has approximately 60 percent of the family housing and 50 percent of the unaccompanied housing. It features Robinson Barracks Elementary School, a commissary, furniture store and broadcast studios for American Forces Network Stuttgart.

Finally, Stuttgart Army Airfield in Filderstadt is the home for the aviation arms of each respective combatant commands, as well as the primary platform for military cargo. It is etched in history as one of the main locations for aircraft used during the Berlin Airlift, 1948-1948.



# In-processing made easy at Stuttgart CPF

**By Marion E. Bruce**

In-Processing Specialist  
USAG Stuttgart Central Processing Facility

All personnel arriving to work within the USAG Stuttgart military community should be picked up by their unit or sponsor.

Soldiers routed to Ramstein Air Base will automatically be overnighed, there, and then taken by shuttle to Stuttgart the next day. The Central Processing Facility (CPF) will call their units when they arrive (personnel flying in to Frankfurt, traveling with pets should take the train to Stuttgart unless the unit/sponsor arranges to meet them there).

Everyone, military and civilian, who are assigned, attached or otherwise performing duty in Stuttgart, will report to the CPF for initial in-processing. Sponsors should escort incoming personnel to the CPF to fill out a questionnaire to be scheduled for in-processing.

Unit commanders and supervisors will ensure that newly assigned military and DA civilian personnel report to the CPF on the first workday after arriving in the community to attend all required community in-processing before being released by the CPF, and to ensure new personnel are not assigned duties until CPF processing requirements are completed, per AE Reg. 612-1.

The CPF is your one-stop in-processing center. Newcomers will be scheduled for a 10-day in-processing period beginning one or two duty days after arrival. There are also approximately three days built in to the schedule to allow time to complete the in-processing checklist and accomplish unit check-in. The mandatory portion of the in-processing checklist ensures that personnel are properly physically in-processed at all necessary stations.

On your first or second day, you'll attend a half-day community briefing consisting of the following:

- CPF overview of the schedule and in-processing checklist;
- Transportation briefing including information on dates of arrival of your shipments; and
- Housing Office briefing which is required before you are assigned to quarters or given a statement of non-availability for off-post housing and provided with approved addresses (contractors are not authorized to use housing services.)

Immediately afterward, Soldiers will remain at



Photo by Kevin S. Abel

**The Central Processing Facility (CPF) located in Building 2913 on Panzer Kaserne is where you will start your in-processing to the Stuttgart Military Community. Also located in building 2913 is both on/off-post housing, transportation, furnishings & appliances and a German Cantina.**

the CPF to settle any travel and PCS vouchers with Army Finance.

Two hours of required SHARP/SAPR, ASAP, and Suicide Prevention training are given that afternoon. CPF will record your mandatory attendance and provide it to your unit.

The schedule contains two full days of mandatory In-processing Training Center briefings covering antiterrorism, TRICARE, landlords/tenants and the garrison command brief.

Two days of mandatory resiliency training covers seven modules of organizational and behavioral topics with the aim of improving teamwork, especially in the joint environment.

Civilian employees will attend a Civilian

Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) in-processing briefing that normally takes place Thursday mornings. Once the CPAC processing is complete, civilians will return to the CPF to complete the appropriate briefing modules and other required in-processing tasks before starting their new jobs.

New personnel will be scheduled for one day of host nation orientation. The orientation is an overview of German language and customs with a half-day bus trip to learn what to expect in restaurants and how to operate the local public transit systems. Bring euros!

A half-day is reserved for drivers training and testing. All personnel assigned to Germany must have a USAREUR driver's license before renting, driving or registering a vehicle on post. Online testing is also now an option through Joint Knowledge Online.

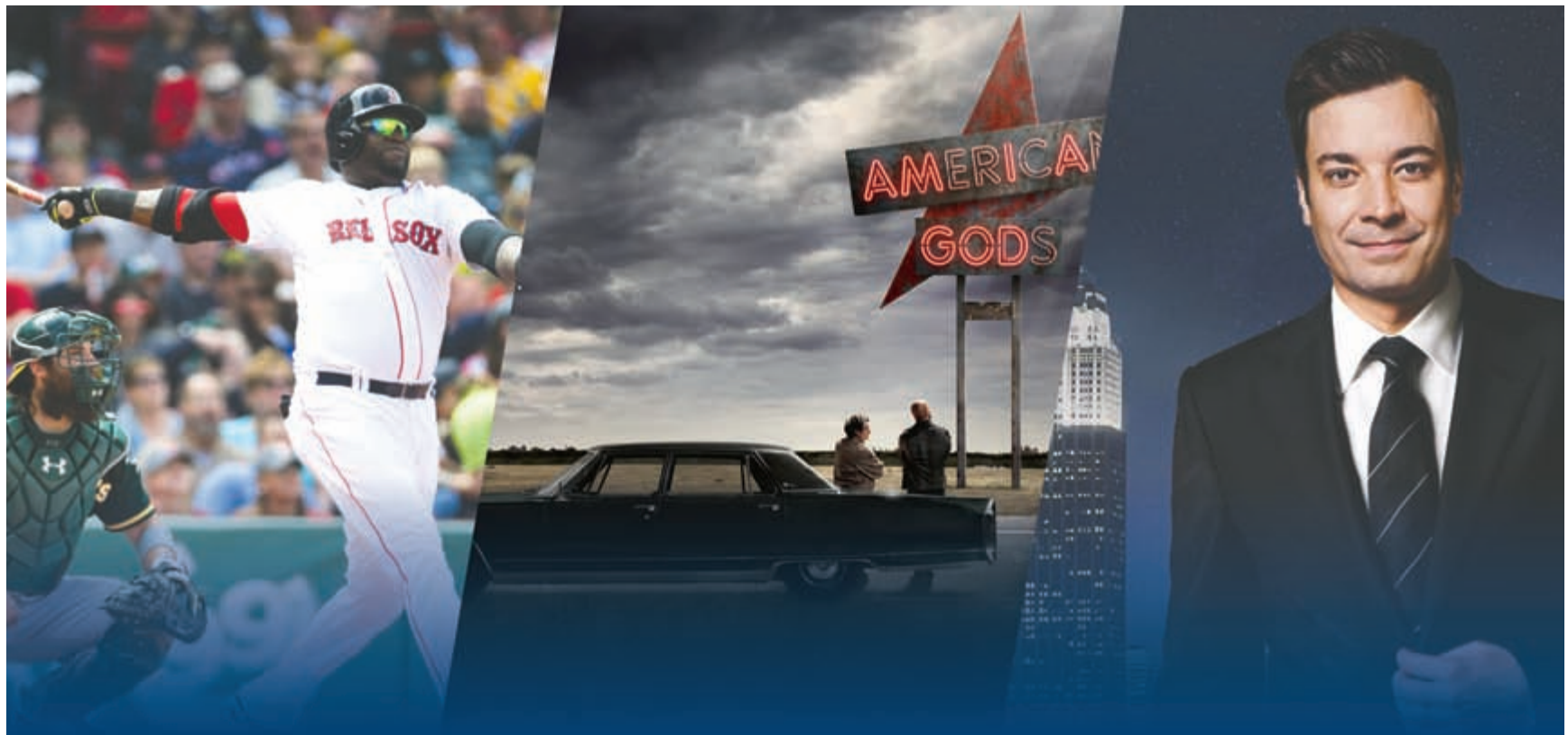
Newcomers may accompany the TRICARE patient liaison on a visit to local German hospitals where they could be taken in an emergency or referred to for specialty care (the Patch Clinic has no after hours or emergency care, and the nearest military hospital is Landstuhl, about three hours away by car). This half-day tour is highly popular.

Spouses of incoming personnel are welcome to attend any training, but must sign up for a seat on the bus for the hospital and orientation tours. Children under 16 are not allowed on the tours or in the training classes.

## Get started earlier

The CPF in Bldg. 2913 on Panzer Kaserne is open weekdays 8-11:30 a.m. and 1-4:30 p.m. Call DSN 431-2599 or civ. 07031-15-2599 for more information.

To receive the standard in-processing email that includes sample two-week schedules, bus schedules, kaserne maps, driver training details and other information usually contained in an in-processing packet, as well as the in-processing questionnaire, please contact the CPF at [usarmy.stuttgart.imcom-europe.mbx.cpf@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.stuttgart.imcom-europe.mbx.cpf@mail.mil).



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# Protective tips for house hunting off-post

Compiled by **Holly DeCarlo-White**  
USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs

## Prior to selecting a location

- Use an internet mapping tool such as google maps to verify the selected location provides more than one entry/exit route.
- Determine availability of adequate, nearby parking.
- Ensure there are no major industrial areas within close proximity of selected residence.

## Safety and security questions to ask

- Ask local security agencies, such as Military Police, Antiterrorism Officer, or G2 / S2 about security concerns within selected area.
- Conduct a terrain walk of selected area, look for signs of attempted break-ins on doors and windows.
- Does the neighborhood generally seem to be safe and well kept, or does it look run down and unsafe (check residence during daylight hours and hours of darkness)?

## Dwelling layout considerations

- Overall look and appearance, verify adequate general maintenance, such as no broken windows or damaged doors.
- If necessary, verify fire escapes / exits are

available and functioning, and ensure they can be secured.

## Test lighting inside and out

- Check area lighting, are street lights installed (check during hours of darkness).
- Check residence lighting, does the residence have exterior lighting / interior lighting.
- Check entrance ways, hallways, walkways, parking areas, elevators, stairwells, mail areas, and laundry areas for adequate lighting.

## What to do

- Ensure the dwelling has multiple entry / exit doors to provide emergency escape alternatives.
- Ensure all exterior doors have dead-bolt type locks.
- Ensure all doors and frames are heavy and solidly constructed.
- Ask if lock cylinders can be changed.
- Ensure the entrance door has a peephole or intercom system.
- Windows with grills, bars, or horizontal blinds installed provide greater security.
- Ensure windows can be secured from the interior.
- Built-in security alarm systems can help deter break-ins.
- Ensure the dwelling has fire or

smoke detectors / alarms installed, and purchase fire extinguishers if not already present in the dwelling.

- Good external lighting can provide additional security.
- Fences may deter theft and add privacy.
- Consult with personnel within your local housing office, security officials, and your local antiterrorism officer prior to, during and when making a final selection.

## What not to do

- Don't choose a dwelling near an industrial zone, power plant, or other hazards i.e., flood zones increases the likelihood of damage due to fallout from man-made/natural disaster.
- Don't choose a dwelling located on a dead-end street. It limits emergency entry and exit and could increase likelihood of house break-ins.
- Avoid dwellings with unsecured underground parking. It can increase the effect of vehicle borne improvised explosive devices.
- Don't choose a dwelling with obvious signs of forced entry or attempted forced entry, such as scratches on doors, putty around latches and window frames.

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# Your home away from home

## USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs Office

One of the top things on the minds of the entire family during a permanent change of station move is the new residence. Where will we live? How big will it be? What's the neighborhood like?

For those coming to Stuttgart, the answers to these questions can vary widely.

Approximately 30 percent of the Stuttgart military community lives in the 1,300 on-base housing units, with the remaining 70 percent residing on the economy.

On-post family housing units throughout Stuttgart are stairwell apartments ranging from two to five bedrooms. They are located on Panzer Kaserne, Kelley, Robinson, and Patch Barracks. Most five bedroom units are located on Kelley Barracks.

In-home amenities for on-base housing include a laundry room with U.S. appliances for each unit, individual storage space, and 110 and 220-volt outlets for both U.S. and German appliances.

Community services include fitness centers, a club for social events, elementary, middle and high schools, and libraries within walking distance.

Upon receipt of permanent change of station orders, uniformed members and U.S. government civilians are strongly encouraged to complete the application for assignment to housing Department of Defense Form 1746. This is the official form used to create a customer housing record and is updated within 48 hours after the customer arrives in Stuttgart.

For those living off-base, the variety of homes is nearly endless. Everything from modern homes and apartments with art nouveau architecture, to centuries-old half-timber converted barns and everything in between are available here. While rental prices throughout the area vary slightly, as a general rule of thumb the areas closer to Stuttgart/Böblingen city center are higher in rent. Those properties located further out in the suburbs/countryside tend to be lower in rent and larger in size.

Start finding your home by searching [www.HOMES.mil](http://www.HOMES.mil) the military home finders' tool even here in Europe. This site contains listings of rental homes in and around Stuttgart, most within the school zones, and all are free of realtor fees.

There are many home types in Germany. Apartments, penthouses, maisonette apartments (which are two-floored apartments), townhouses, duplexes and free-standing houses can be found for rent, as well as large homes or free-standing single houses with multiple bathrooms, large yards and five-plus bedrooms. Though these latter types of homes are harder to find, apartments, townhouses, and duplexes are easier to find and are generally less expensive.



Photo by Kevin S. Abel

**The 1,300 family housing units available in USAG Stuttgart are stairwell apartments with two to five bedrooms that are spread throughout four of the five installations. There are no housing units on Stuttgart Army Airfield.**

The cost of rent needs to align with the uniformed member's overseas housing allowance rate and living quarters allowance for U.S. government civilians or the cost of additional rent is an out-of-pocket expense. Financial overseas housing entitlements are listed on the Department of Defense overseas allowance calculator webpage at [www.defensetravel.dod.mil](http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil).

## Housing referral services

The Housing Referral Office offers home-finding services to U.S. government civilians and service members who are authorized to live off-post. Contractor personnel are not eligible for housing referral services in accordance with Army Regulation 420-1, "Army Facilities Management."

Pervin Estates is the housing referral contractor. The office manages the HOMES.mil listings website and provides up to three escorted home tours, home inspections and individual counseling to discuss rental units found on HOMES.mil.

All homes listed on HOMES.mil guarantee a furnished kitchen and light fixtures. Be aware that homes found on other home rental websites in Stuttgart may not include kitchen cabinets, appliances or light fixtures and some require payment of a realtor fee.

## On- or off-post administrative steps

USAG Stuttgart offers two types of housing briefs to assist customers in finding the most suitable rental for their needs.

The Central Processing Facility (CPF) offers a newcomers brief that is mandatory for both uniformed members and U.S. government civilians. The CPF housing brief provides an overview of the housing office services and highlights off-post housing processes.

Housing's in-processing brief is a one-on-one between a housing counselor and the uniformed member. This brief is mandatory for uniformed members and optional for U.S. government civilians.

At the housing brief, civilian sponsors will receive a Pervin Estates customer routing form, and unit detail request form. After 24 hours, Pervin Estates will return the landlord details by email. For the initial request, the routing and detail request forms are emailed to Pervin Estates. All subsequent requests for unit details will require the return of each comment card for each new landlord request listing. Comment cards are included in the unit detail request form.

## Rental contract process

The USAG Stuttgart Housing Office-approved contract is a legally-binding agreement between the landlord and the tenant, and is in both English and in German.

The first step in this process is when the prospective tenant submits a completed copy of the contract cover sheet after the contract is signed by the landlord or property manager. This must be sent via official U.S. government encrypted email to the housing office at [offpost@usagst.net](mailto:offpost@usagst.net) to the attention of Pervin Estates and off-post housing. "Make sure to complete and send the coversheet as soon as possible because it's your guarantee that the property will be removed from the HOMES.mil website, which means it's closer to being yours." The next step is when the prospective tenant schedules a contract review with the housing office no later than two business days from the date the landlord signs the contract.

"As soon as the landlord's signature is on the contract, schedule an appointment immediately," said Konrad Herzig, USAG Stuttgart housing lead customer service counselor.

A housing counselor can save the customer time. "I wouldn't wait until the contract review appointment. Email the contract to the housing office in advance of the contract review appointment and if time permits a housing counselor will review the contract," said Herzig.

## Personnel on TDY or deployment orders

In the absence of the sponsor, a power of attorney is required for the housing office to approve a garrison off-post rental contract. For on-post housing services, copy of the sponsor's temporary duty order or deployment order is required and the requirement for a power of attorney is waived. For housing contact information and a list of services, go to the USAG Stuttgart website at [www.stuttgart.army.mil](http://www.stuttgart.army.mil) and select the Housing Services Office.

# Going green through recycling, ecolabels

## USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs

Figuring out how to sort trash, recycle and go green with environmentally friendly products in Germany can be quite complicated with different color bins and eco-labels.

Germany has a very thorough waste sorting system with up to five or six different categories of waste and practices that vary from county to county, and occasionally from city to city, so things can quickly get confusing. To help residents sort out all of the mess, U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart offers an in-depth guide to recycling that outlines specific procedures for all of the three major counties in the Stuttgart area and also on-post. This guide, along with the general overview provided here, should arm most residents to recycle properly and help do their part to contribute to our host nation's impressive recycling efforts.

One of the most common frustrations for Americans is having a much smaller trash bin. Often, this is a frustration that does not have to be endured. Trash cans are supposed to be based on family size and are usually adequate as long as recyclables and other trash are being properly sorted. Larger families who find themselves constantly overfilling their trash bins should consider talking to their landlords about getting larger cans, although this may affect the monthly trash fee and a landlord will likely pass that cost on to the renter depending on the specifics of the rental arrangement. Residents may inquire for more information about a larger trash can at local city offices, but usually it will ultimately have to be the homeowner or landlord who orders the larger bin.

For on post residents, things are relatively simple. Clearly labeled containers are available in all housing areas, and the online guide details what items can and cannot go into each container.

Residents living off post should note that bringing trash on post to dump is prohibited unless you are taking items to the Re-Use Center on Panzer Kaserne for re-use or proper disposal.

For off post, getting rid of extra trash is not costly. In fact, it's sometimes free, but does take some effort and coordination. Some areas have recycling centers and city dumps where residents can take their trash, and almost all areas have procedures for residents to request

pick-up of bulk trash and other non-standard waste. Often these pickups are free of charge, but usually are only offered a limited number of times per year. Contact the agency for your area for more information.

Although specific procedures vary, most

includes most normal paper products, books, magazines and similar items, as well as flat plastics like plastic bags, and flat pieces of plastic and Styrofoam. Round paper and recyclables includes plastic bottles, cans and similar products. For a more detailed description, see the online recycling guide.



Graphic by Kevin S. Abel

Find out more about eco-labels. For the European ecolabel, visit <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel/information-and-contacts.html>; for the Blaue Engel, visit [www.blauer-engel.de/en](http://www.blauer-engel.de/en); Download the garrison recycling handbooks at [www.stuttgart.army.mil/services-trash.html](http://www.stuttgart.army.mil/services-trash.html).

programs divide trash and recyclables into six categories: trash/rubbish, recyclables, paper, organic waste, glass and hazardous waste.

There are differences in how trash and recyclables are handled in the three major Stuttgart counties, the main difference being the various bins and how items are sorted. Glass is handled much the same at various recycling points, while hazardous materials and bulk trash have their own, specific requirements.

In Böblingen County, home to Panzer Kaserne, there are four bins, all black, but with color-coded lids. A black lid is for trash, an orange lid is for recyclables, a green lid is for organic and a blue lid is for paper.

The city of Stuttgart uses three bins and the yellow sack. A grey bin is for trash, a green bin is for paper, a brown bin is for organic waste and yellow bags are used for recyclables. Yellow bags can be picked up at city halls. Ludwigsburg County uses two bins and groups recyclables and paper together. A green bin is used on a rotating schedule for "flat" and "round" recyclables (including paper). Flat paper and recyclables

Sperrmüll or bulky trash is residual waste that is too big for the regular trash bin, but does not exceed a given size. For example, in Böblingen, it cannot exceed 2 meters by 1.2 meters by .8 meters, and must weigh less than 60 kilograms per piece. Mattresses, cupboards, bed frames, furniture, carpets, mirrors, suitcases, skis and surfboards are all examples of common bulk trash items.

## Ecolabels

Ecolabels are official symbols placed on products designed to do less harm to the environment than similar products. The next time you're shopping for food, appliances, clothing, paint, etc., look for the one with ecolabel, Blaue Engle or Energy Star logos.

The European Ecolabel helps to identify products and services that have a reduced environmental impact through their product life cycles. It is celebrating 25 years of helping Europe be greener and more – in addition to not being harmful for the Earth, clothing and textiles must be assembled in safe and fair conditions.

The German "Blue Angel (Blauer Engel) eco-label is awarded to products and services which, from a holistic point of view, are of benefit to the environment and meet high standards of serviceability, health and occupational protection.

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# Eating and drinking like a local

## *Big meals at lunch, bread at supper*

### USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs

The traditional German manner of eating is to have a big, hearty warm meal at midday and have some bread, cheese and sausages or coldcuts in the evening. A wide variety of dishes are available at restaurants, ranging from a simple bread plate to a full, multicourse meal.

Hearty German cuisine usually focuses on a main meat dish. German men eat, on average 1,092 grams of meat per week with German women consuming on average about half that, according to the German Society for Nutrition. While vegetarian dishes and products are certainly available, the "wurst" is

still king, especially bratwurst. Add some curry powder and ketchup, and you've got the popular currywurst.

While bratwurst is certainly a common staple of German cuisine, there's a lot more variety in German food than that simple image conveys. It is true that certain universal elements of German food unite this nation of 16 proud states, each boasting their own unique cuisine. But, from roasts to schnitzel, to breads, cheeses and wine, the idea that German food is basic or simple is



Photo by Thinkstockphotos.com

The traditional Bavarian Weisswurst (white sausage) and a pretzel seen here is emblematic of German cuisine, but is only the starting point of what Germany has to offer.

simply not accurate.

To add to the solid heartiness of a good meat dish, potatoes are usually served in some form with every large meal. Germans serve potatoes in every manner imaginable, from mashed potatoes to potato salad) to potato pancakes and more.

Bread is served with most meals. A wide variety of bread products make up a large portion of the traditional German diet.

German regions pride themselves on certain

foods or dishes. A signature Swabian dish is maultaschen, a layered pasta dish similar to ravioli. It is larger than ravioli and without tomato sauce, and packed with minced or smoked meat, spinach onions, herbs and spices. Zwiebelrostbraten, a beef roast with sautéed onions, is another popular Swabian dish.

Schnitzel, served throughout Germany and beyond, is usually served with french fries. Roasted meats and fish variety from region to region, making traveling throughout Germany a culinary delight.

Kasespatzel, a noodle and cheese dish, is not to be confused with macaroni and cheese. Rotisserie chicken is very popular, as are Turkish dishes like kebabs.

As a centrally located European nation, Germany has a wide variety of foods from other nations. Italian, French and eastern European restaurants are common, and other varieties of international fare such as Asian and Indian foods can be found as well.

Wine has been developed to a high art form in Germany, and different regions produce a variety of wines, many of which can be enjoyed right at the vineyard. From red Dornfelder to white Moselle, a German wine can be found to please most any palate. Stuttgart takes pride in its wines. Some of Stuttgart's vineyards are located near Robinson Barracks.

Germany has long been associated world-wide with beer, and for good reason. Swabian breweries produce several great beers. In general, German beer is typically a little stronger than American beer, ranging from around five percent to as high as 16 percent alcohol by volume.

It is important to remember to enjoy alcohol responsibly in Germany. Drinking and driving laws are very strict here, and many of the alcoholic beverages offered can be much stronger than what many Americans are used to. There are very few laws limiting public consumption of alcohol, and alcohol is readily available, so self-control and responsible consumption is the key.

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# Dining ideas for Stuttgart military community

## USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs

### Kelley Barracks Commissary — Bldg. 3316

Custom cakes, fresh sandwiches to-go, lunchtime salad bar

### Exchange Roving Concession

Hours: Weekdays 11 a.m. – 6 p.m.

**Kelley Club** — Bldg. 3300  
Specialty: Weekday all-you-can-eat lunch buffet  
Hours: Weekdays 11 a.m. – 2 p.m., and Wednesday to Friday 5 – 9 p.m.

**The Broadway Café** — Bldg. 3320

Coffee, cappuccino, latte, hot chocolate and tea, as well as a delicious selection of bagels, cakes and freshly baked cookies

### German Kantina

Open for breakfast and lunch services, Weekdays from 6:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

### Panzer Kaserne Commissary — Bldg. 2957

Special service includes fresh sandwiches and sushi to-go

### 1/10th Special Forces Group (Airborne) Dining Facility

Weekdays, breakfast 7 – 9 a.m., lunch 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. Closed holidays and

training holidays.

### Main Exchange Food Court — Bldg. 2903

**Burger King:** Weekdays 7 a.m. – 8 p.m.; Saturdays 8 a.m. – 8 p.m., and Sundays 9 a.m. – 7 p.m. Breakfast is served until 10:30 a.m.

**Charley's:** Monday to Saturday, 10:30 a.m. – 7 p.m., Sundays 11 a.m. – 6 p.m.

**Popeye's:** Monday to Thursday, 10:30 a.m. – 7 p.m., Fridays and Saturdays 10:30 – 8 p.m., and Sundays 11 a.m. – 7 p.m.

**Pizza Hut:** Monday to Saturday, 10:30 a.m. – 8

p.m., and 11 a.m. – 7 p.m., Sunday

**Sehne Bakery:** Weekdays 7 a.m. – 7 p.m., Monday to Friday, Saturdays 9 a.m. – 7 p.m., Sundays 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**Starbucks:** Weekdays 7 a.m. – 7 p.m., Saturdays 8 a.m. – 7 p.m., Sundays 9 a.m. – 7 p.m.

**Roving concessions:** Monday to Saturday 11 a.m. – 7 p.m., Sundays 11 a.m. – 6 p.m.

**German American Kantine** — Bldg. 2913  
German-American daily breakfast and lunch specials, including coffee

to-go  
Hours: Weekdays 7 a.m. – 2 p.m.

### Irish Pub, Galaxy Bowling Entertainment Center — Bldg. 2998

Full service bar  
Hours: Tuesday to Thursday 6 – 10 p.m., and Fridays and Saturdays 4 p.m. – midnight

### Strike Zone Snack Bar, Galaxy Bowling Entertainment Center — Bldg. 2998

Salads, burgers, cheese steaks, chicken, hot dogs, pizza, combo meals, and much more  
Hours: Tuesday to Thursday 11 a.m. – 10 p.m., Fridays and Saturdays 11 a.m. – midnight, Sundays noon – 6 p.m.

### Patch Barracks Commissary — Bldg. 2350

Special services include bakery, custom cakes, deli, fresh and made-to-order sandwiches to-go, rotisserie chicken, lunchtime salad bar, and sushi  
Deli hours: Daily 10 a.m. – 7 p.m.

### Exchange Food Court — Bldg. 2330

**Burger King:** 7 a.m. to 8 p.m., Weekdays and 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., Saturday and Sunday

**Taco Bell:** 10:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., Monday to Friday and 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., Saturday and Sunday

**Subway:** 10:30 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday to Saturday

**Sehne Bakery:** 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., Monday to Friday; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday; and 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Sunday

### German Kantine — Bldg. 2913

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**SEE LOCAL DINING**

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# Exchange services on post offer convenience

## USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs

The Exchange offers a variety of shopping and services for the Stuttgart military community.

### Panzer Kaserne

The main Exchange shopping mall, The main Exchange shopping mall located on Panzer Kaserne, built in 2007, has 63,000 square feet of retail space brings a variety of local and international products, foods and services to Stuttgart community customers.

It includes a food court with hamburgers, sandwiches, fried chicken, pizza, a coffee shop and a German bakery serving a daily variety of fresh and authentic German baked goods, sandwiches and salads. Outside of the PX (and sometimes in front of the Exchange shoppette near the community mail room) are rotating vendors offering a variety of different foods.

In addition to foods, At the Panzer Car Care



Photo by Taghika Miller

The main Exchange shopping mall located on Panzer Kaserne, built in 2007, has 63,000 square feet of retail space and includes a barber shop, a hair salon, a nail salon and many local concession stores as well as a food court.

beverages and snacks, the Express shoppette offers automotive and medical supplies. It's also home to a large, joint-service clothing sales store.

and Auto Parts Store, a professional staff of sales and service techs will keep the family mobile by offering basic oil changes, and services on brakes, exhaust, suspension and tires.

Other concessions in the building include a barber, a rental car desk, a hair and beauty salon, and a dry cleaner/alteration shop. The large shoppette on post is co-located with a multi-lane gas station and features stationary, pizza and some groceries.

matinee showings of the latest in cinema entertainment, including 3D films.

### Robinson Barracks

For home furnishings, an expanded furniture store at Robinson Barracks offers brand name, ready-to-assemble desks and chairs, dining room, living room and bedroom sets, rugs, lamps and more. The store also sells stationary, automotive supplies and some seasonal items, as well as beverages and snacks.

### Kelley Barracks

The Kelley Express shoppette offers convenient hours of operation and a broad selection of basics for service members and their families. It is co-located with a gas station.

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### Contact Info

To discover all the Exchange opportunities in the Stuttgart military community, information on services and hours, call civ. 07031-20420 or visit [www.shopmyexchange.com](http://www.shopmyexchange.com).

# Learn to shop like a local

## USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs

Shopping in Germany can be a very positive experience and shoppers will find most of the same things that they're used to back in the States.

Upon arrival in Stuttgart, shopping is one of the first things many newcomers like to do. However, Stuttgart military community members should be aware of some important differences

## Malls

One thing most Americans have to adjust to a little in Germany is the way in which Germans shop. Most shops are smaller and in general, most towns have a central, downtown shopping district where most of the specialty stores are located. Larger department stores are gaining popularity in Germany, and at least one or two can be found in most sizeable German cities.

Sprawling shopping malls with dozens of shops, a food court and a movie theater like the kind that dot towns across America are still somewhat rare in Germany, though they can be found in larger cities. There are several large shopping centers throughout the Stuttgart area, including as close as Sindelfingen and Boeblingen.

Most German cities have a Fussgänger (pedestrian zone) offering a shopping experience that more than makes up for the lack of malls. Think of them as large, open-air, cobble-stoned, mile-long shopping malls. Specialty stores, restaurants and other services line these pedestrian streets, offering just about anything the average shopaholic might desire.

## Groceries

Recently, grocery shopping in Germany has become a much more convenient experience. Franchise grocery stores that offer a full range of basic everyday grocery needs can be found in towns (small villages may not have these stores, but they're usually found in a neighboring village or town).

Grocery stores in Germany are laid out similar to U.S. stores, and though the product names and some of the packaging may be different, the basics are still the same. There is fresh produce, canned goods, frozen foods, frozen pizzas and breakfast cereals.

The measurements used in Germany use the metric system. The information on this page will help with some of the most common conversions.

Also, most German grocery stores do not provide free bags. Most have plastic bags available for purchase for around 10 euro cents each. A very common practice among Germans is to bring their own bags.

## Clothes

Just like the weights and measurements for groceries are metric, clothing sizes in Germany are different to those in the U.S. It helps to know some of the different clothing size systems. There are applications for smartphones that can help with size conversion as well as online resources, though the size conversions can vary significantly from brand to brand and even within the same brand. While some clothing now comes with tags that list both U.S. and European sizes, it's important to be aware of the differences. Most clothing stores offer changing rooms just like in the U.S., so the best practice is to always try clothing on before purchasing it.

## Cash and carry!

Cash is still much more widely used in Germany than in the U.S. and many stores do not take credit/bank cards, and sometimes those that do require a minimum purchase. It is not unusual for a German to go to the store with several thousand euros in cash to buy a full kitchen.

Many larger stores and other shopping venues are now accepting credit cards. However, smaller stores, and especially grocery stores, often don't. A good rule of thumb if you are buying food, or shopping in a store where most of the purchases would be below €100 is to be prepared to pay with cash. For stores where the average purchase is much higher, ask if they take credit cards.

The Girocard, a German equivalent to an American debit card, is gaining popularity. Most American credit and debit cards are not compatible with this system, which is used at grocers such as Penny, Aldi and Lidl. Service Credit Union's overseas branches offer a Girocard for your SCU account. The cards are available to members at any SCU branch in Germany.

## Returns

Return policies are another area in which shopping has changed in recent years in Germany, but they are still a little different than in the U.S. Most large department stores will have return policies, but these policies may be more restrictive than those that Americans are familiar with.

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# Tips to help newcomers ease into life in Stuttgart

## USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs

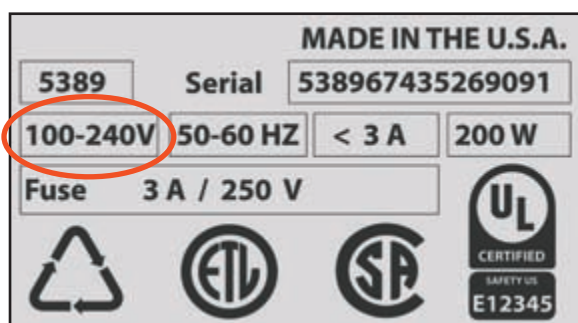
Life in Germany can be very different than in the U.S., and often it's the little things that make the big difference. These tips may help to ease some of those little daily challenges.

Germany is part of the European Union, a collection of European nations that have extensive legal agreements with one another. Travel across borders in Europe is usually not restricted and is similar to travel between U.S. states. However, anyone on leisure travel (not official orders) should have a tourist passport on them at all times. Service members should also be aware of their organization's policies on cross-border travel. A leave or pass status is often required when crossing borders.

Due to increased force protection measures, regulations and policies concerning the wear of the uniform off post are more restrictive in Europe than the U.S. Become familiar with your organization's policies and follow them.

## Electricity and communications

Germany uses a 220-volt electrical system which means many appliances from the U.S. require an electrical transformer that will convert 220-volts to 110-volts. However, some appliances won't work properly, even with a transformer. Also, using transformers tends to use more energy than using 220-volt or dual-voltage appliances. Some 220-volt appliances are available for long term loan from the Furnishings Management Office.



Landlines and cell phones are both readily available throughout Germany and are offered by a variety of service providers, as is internet. Contracts are (usually) initially two years and automatically renew unless cancelled well in advance. Unless specifically included in the rate plan, all calls incur fees, even local calls. Flat rate plans may include local and national calls throughout the German landline network. Cell phones in Germany are available with a variety of rate plans for outgoing calls, messages and data downloads.

Most incoming cellular calls do not incur a charge for the receiver of the call, but calling a cell phone from other cell phones, or landlines does incur a fee unless included in a given flat rate plan. Internet is available from the telephone or cable companies located in the Panzer Kaserne Exchange. Availability of internet can vary widely depending on location. In larger cities, broadband access is very common and compares to broadband access found in the U.S. In smaller outlying villages, internet access, if available, can be much slower. If living off base, it is often a good idea to look into the internet access available when choosing a location in which to live.

The American Forces Network (available through TKS located at the Exchange) offers English language cable television services on base and to some off-base locations. German cable and satellite providers may offer some limited programming in English, but many off-base residents also look to online sources for streaming video programming. Be aware, because of country copyright restrictions, some of the U.S.-based subscription online services may not work on German Internet connections. Do your research before signing up for an online video streaming or movie download service. Also, be sure not to participate in any illegal downloading or uploading of copyrighted material.

Germany observes a quiet day on Sundays. Most retailers, including grocery stores and many times even fuel stations and other conveniences, are closed on Sundays. In larger cities and on the autobahns, fuel stations will often be open, though may have limited hours. Restaurants and some bakeries may also be open on Sundays, but will often have limited hours.

## Community quiet hours

Most cities and villages have ordinances concerning loud noises on certain days and times. In some areas these are enforceable laws, and in others, simply courtesy guidelines. Regardless of whether or not they are legally enforceable, they are considered a cultural norm to follow. Though specifics may vary from town to town, a good general rule is to observe quiet hours nightly from around 8 or 9 p.m. until about 8 or 9 a.m. Monday through Saturday, and all day on Sunday. During these times, try to keep loud noises to a minimum and do not engage in activities that inherently create loud noises, such as lawn mowing, using power tools or playing loud music. To find out the specific ordinances in your town or village, visit the local government offices.

Germany observes a quiet day on Sundays. Most retailers, including grocery stores and many times even fuel stations and other conveniences, are closed on Sundays. In larger cities and on the autobahns, fuel stations will often be open, though may have limited hours. Restaurants and some bakeries may also be open on Sundays, but will often have limited hours.

## Banking and mail

Banking services are offered to the Stuttgart military community by Service Credit Union and the Community Bank. Payment of many German bills, and occasionally retail purchases, are often accomplished through a direct bank transfer system (Überweisung). German transfers can be processed through both SCU and Community Bank, both of which are connected to the German banking system.

Command-sponsored service members and civilian employees will get an Army Post Office mail box for personal use. Because it is part of the U.S. mail system, U.S. mailing rules apply and some things may not be mailed through the APO. Visit [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com) before shipping any questionable items. Also, you may be exempted from customs fees when importing items from the U.S., even when shipped through non-U.S. means. Those considering importing items for personal use not through the APO should check with the customs office for more information.

## Tipping

Tipping is handled differently in Germany than in the U.S. At restaurants and bars, a set-rate tip is not generally used. Tipping in Germany is based on the quality of the service, and a good rule of thumb is to round to the next even euro amount. For example, if the bill is € 14, a tip of about €1 for a total of €15 might be appropriate. Also, tips are usually given directly to the receiving person as part of the payment transaction, and are not left on the table. If paying with a credit card, be sure to tell the server the full amount to be paid, including tip, as many credit card machines in Germany do not provide a receipt that allows for a write-in gratuity.



## Bicycling and the commissaries

Germany is ranked the fifth most bike-friendly nation in Europe by the European Cycling Federation (27 total nations ranked). Getting around by bike is safe and easy throughout Germany and makes a great way to stay healthy as well. Cycling paths are abundant and well-marked. While Germany does not have a bicycle helmet law, most U.S. installations do have a mandatory helmet policy for all cyclists. German law requires safety items such as lights, two brakes and reflectors.

Finally, the Defense Commissary Agency offers a wide variety of American brand name foods, fresh produce, beauty and health products and other groceries can be found throughout the Stuttgart military community. The main commissary is on Patch Barracks, with smaller commissaries on Panzer Kaserne, Kelley and Robinson Barracks.



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# AFN offers hometown TV, radio programming overseas

## USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs Office

Since 1943, the American Forces Network Europe has been providing American service members, families and Department of Defense civilian employees stationed in Europe with the best of American radio and television services.

## AFN Stuttgart

The local AFN station, AFN Stuttgart, broadcasts out of a new, state-of-the-art facility on Robinson Barracks and offers a variety of live and pre-recorded programming.

AFN Stuttgart's "The Eagle," (FM 102.3) broadcasts live Monday through Friday from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. These broadcasts can also be heard on AFN 360. Visit AFN Stuttgart's website: <http://stuttgart.afneurope.net> for more programming and contact information, and to tune in to the station via AFN 360 online streaming radio.

AFN Stuttgart regularly features interviews and other special events with community leaders and organizations throughout the area to bring important current information to its listeners. To engage with AFN directly, check out their

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/afnstuttgart](http://www.facebook.com/afnstuttgart).

Receiving AFN Television Programming  
Service members and families residing on base can get AFN through cable services offered by TKS. For more information on the services offered, visit [www.tksable.com](http://www.tksable.com).

American television programming is now available virtually anywhere. It's a streamed service that delivers live American television programming to your home, right over your internet connection.

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## TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Getting connected in Germany



When you need to get connected in Germany, TKS is the place to go. TKS is "The American Telco in Germany", specializing in delivering innovative and cost-effective services to military personnel stationed in Europe.

To get connected, just visit a TKSShop near you. You'll find a shop in your local Exchange facility. TKS can get you connected wherever you live, services are available both off-base and on-base Germany wide.

Why should you consider TKS? TKS has delivered quality services to the US military for over two decades and is also an elite USO Worldwide Strategic Partner. Your patronage furthers the USO's global mission of providing support to service members and their families.

Have questions about a bill, or need help getting set up? You can count on top-notch TKS technical support and customer service in English as a standard feature. TKS also

offers extremely flexible terms with no long-term contract commitments, which means that you never have to worry about early cancellation fees or hidden costs. Other carriers in Germany provide little or no English customer service and mainly offer plans with a long-term contract commitment. Let's find out more about the features and benefits available with TKS.

### TELEPHONE & INTERNET

easyConnect makes getting online and staying in touch easier and more cost-effective than ever. Enjoy ultra-fast web connectivity while making free phone calls to the USA.

#### easyConnect features

- VAT forms accepted
- no minimum contract duration
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- plug-and-play setup
- easy online bill payments
- English billing and tech support

### TELEVISION

TKS can hook you up with some of the best American television entertainment right here in the heart of Europe. easyTV is a high-definition entertainment service that is available Germany-wide, off-base and on-base. You don't even have to be a TKS customer to tune in because the service is compatible with any internet service provider. Just connect an easyTV receiver to your broadband connection and you'll be able to tune in to the top USA broadcast and cable networks including Starz, Encore, A&E, Discovery, FX, History, MLB and NFL Network, and whole lot more. A basic subscription starts at only €24.95 a month and includes all AFN channels.

#### easyTV features

- available off-base and on-base
- the top USA networks
- over 100 channels, 40+ HD channels
- go back on demand for up to 7 days
- cloud DVR, timeshift, restart
- easyTV mobile for Android, iOS, and PC

### WIRELESS SOLUTIONS

TKS also offers their own brand of high-speed 4G LTE voice and data wireless services that have been custom-tailored for military consumers with no annual contract. Know that most wireless plans in Germany always come with a 2-year minimum contract and again, cancelling in advance can be expensive!

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# Getting a USAREUR license in Stuttgart

## USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs

The U.S. Army in Europe (USAREUR) driver's license allows service members, civilians and their family members to drive in Germany and much of Europe without going through the process of attaining a local driver's license.

Germany is well-known for its autobahn, a network of roadways that the U.S. interstate highway system emulated. Incoming personnel to Germany may be anxious to get behind the wheel and start zipping across Europe on this famous highway system, but before they do, personnel arriving on permanent change of station orders fall under the Status of Forces Agreement and there are a few steps that must be undertaken, like getting a USAREUR driver's license.

Without exception, personnel and family members who intend on driving must obtain a USAREUR driver's license. An international driver's permit alone does not give you authority to operate a USAREUR-plated vehicle. Additionally, you cannot legally drive a rental car while you wait for your

orientation class followed by a test about road-sign identification and a series of questions pertaining to German and European traffic laws. The fee for the class and test is \$20, and no appointment is necessary. Personnel must present a stateside driver's license to take the test and are advised to have their stateside driver's license and their USAREUR license, when driving.

## Visitors driving USAREUR-plated vehicles

Visitors should get an international driver's permit before arrival, then visit the garrison customs office with the license, passport and the registration of the USAREUR-plated vehicle. Visitors without an international driver's permit must have their valid stateside driver's license translated from a court approved translator in Germany. The customs office can then issue an exception to policy letter. The visitor must carry the letter, passport, stateside license translation or international driver's license whenever they are operating the sponsor's USAREUR-plated vehicle.

## Take the test online prior to PCS

Personnel and family members may complete license training and take the exam prior to arrival. Family members should use the DoD identification number located on the front of their ID cards to log on. The online certification is valid for sixty days and must be valid upon arrival at the Drivers Testing Office.

Go to <http://jko.jten.mil> and enroll in the orientation "USA-007 ,U.S. Forces Driver's Training Program for Europe," followed by the test "USA-007-B, U.S. Forces Driver's Training Program for Europe-Final Course Exam."

Wait two business days (48 hours) and then come to the Driver's Testing Training Station in building 2913 to be issued a POV license.

### Studying for a USAREUR license

For more information, visit the Driver Testing Station, Rm. 301, Bldg. 2913, Panzer Kaserne, or call DSN 431- 2007 or civ. 07031-15-2007. The USAREUR driving manual and a practice test can be found at the USAREUR Registry of Motor Vehicles' website at [www.eur.army.mil/rmv/](http://www.eur.army.mil/rmv/). Study materials are available from the USAREUR Registry of Motor Vehicles website at [www.hqusareur.army.mil/rmv/drivers\\_handbook.htm](http://www.hqusareur.army.mil/rmv/drivers_handbook.htm).

vehicle to arrive without a USAREUR driver's license.

Obtaining this license is part of the Stuttgart garrison in-processing at the Central Processing Facility, Bldg. 2913 on Panzer Kaserne.

To get a USAREUR driver's license, personnel must take an



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## Getting your POV registered and fueled in USAREUR

### USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs

Once personnel have that USAREUR driver's license in hand, they can register a vehicle in the USAREUR Vehicle Registry. Whether bringing a vehicle from the U.S. or registering a new or used vehicle purchased here, the process is essentially the same. The first step is usually obtaining temporary license plates and registration. This requires a \$30 fee for each year registered (some newer vehicles may be eligible for multi-year registrations).

Customers must bring their U.S. forces identification card, USAREUR driver's license and proof of insurance, as well as proof of ownership or title when registering a vehicle. Note, the insurance must be valid in Germany; policies good in the States aren't accepted here.

The temporary plates issued are good for 30 days and are intended to give vehicle owners some time to prepare the vehicle to meet the requirements of the USAREUR safety inspection, which is the next step in the process. Car owners take their cars to the inspection station where the vehicle will be put through an extensive

safety inspection that checks the general mechanical condition of the vehicle, brakes, muffler and exhaust system, safety features and many other components of the automobile. Most vehicles must be re-inspected whenever the registration is renewed, which is usually annually, while brand new vehicles may be exempted from the inspection entirely; contact the vehicle inspection office for more information.

If the vehicle passes the inspection, the temporary plates can be exchanged for regular plates. There is no additional fee when exchanging the temporary plates for regular plates. If the car fails inspection, the defects will be shown and explained to the owner, who can then have the car repaired on or off base. The vehicle can be taken through inspection several times before passing, and there is not a set restriction on number of inspections, but there is no extension

beyond the initial 30-day period.

### Fuel ration card

The fuel ration card is another benefit derived from the SOFA.

This card permits personnel to purchase fuel on post and at select stations off post at prices comparable to stateside prices instead of the standard European price, which is typically much higher. Most cards are good for up to 400 liters of fuel monthly, though some vehicles will be allowed a larger ration. The card can be obtained at the Express gas stations on Patch and Kelley Barracks, as well as the main Exchange on Panzer Kaserne. The card can be preloaded with money at almost any Exchange store and acts essentially as a prepaid cash card at select off post Esso stations. Most German Esso stations participate in the program, but it is usually a good idea to check

with the attendant before fueling up.

On post, the card can be used as a prepaid card, or drivers can opt to pay with cash or credit card and keep the card's balance for off post use. In any case, the card is needed any time the vehicle is fueled in order to avoid paying European prices for fuel.

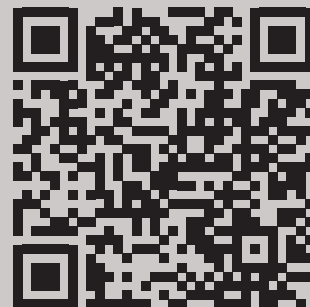
Drivers should maintain awareness of the remaining balance of their fuel rations. Each time fuel is purchased, a receipt is provided showing the remaining cash and fuel ration balance. Multiple vehicles of the same owner (and multiple vehicles registered to the same sponsor, regardless of the primary user) share from a single monetary balance on the card and each vehicle draws from its own ration balance. The gas card and the associated ration are intended for those personnel

listed on the registration only, and cannot be shared with others, even other U.S. personnel who are entitled SOFA benefits.

So, now with license in hand, a registered vehicle and a fuel ration card, newcomers are ready to drive.

### Inspections paperwork

More information on the inspection, including forms that can be filled out ahead of time, can be found at: [www.stuttgart.army.mil/services-vehiclereg.html](http://www.stuttgart.army.mil/services-vehiclereg.html).



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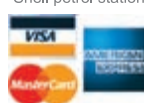
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# What to know if you get pulled over in Germany

By Emily Jennings

U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden Public Affairs

Driving on the roads in a foreign country where you don't speak the language fluently can be nerve wracking enough. But imagine getting pulled over by police. That's what happened last month when Tony Muñoz, a Department of the Army civilian living in Wiesbaden, was on his way back from a trip to the Netherlands.

Muñoz was pulled over just across the border in Germany by an unmarked car that pulled in front of him and flashed signs that read "Polizei" and "Bitte folgen" (Please follow). He knew right away what to do and found a safe place to stop.

Muñoz said the officers who pulled him over were very polite and spoke English. "They asked me a few general questions, such as where I live, where I had traveled to, how long I stayed in the Netherlands and if the car was mine or rented."

Police also searched Muñoz's bag and looked in the trunk of his car and underneath the hood. He followed their instructions and was sent on his way. "As I made my way back to the Autobahn," he said, "I noticed they were already after another car. To me this was a reminder to always carry your documents when going outside of Germany."

Law abiding drivers who are pulled over by police in Germany should have no problems and will likely be sent on their way promptly, as was the case with Muñoz. But it pays to know what to expect and what documents to have on hand to make the process go as smoothly as possible, police said.

A lot of people see the blue lights and panic, said Sgt. Joseph Onessimo, a traffic officer with the Directorate of Emergency Services. But police officers want to emphasize the

importance of slowing down and focusing on safety. "We want people to stop at the next possible safe location," Onessimo said.

Polizeihauptkommissar Stefan Heinz, an instructor at the HFPV (University for Police and Administration) said that while getting pulled over in Germany is a bit different from the U.S., what drivers should do once they stop is the same; turn off the engine, remain inside the vehicle, keep hands visible/on the steering wheel and wait for instructions before looking for documents or taking any action.

Polizei officers will identify themselves and state the reason for the traffic stop. It is important that drivers let the officer know right away if they do not understand German. The vast majority of officers will be able to communicate in English, Heinz said. It may be helpful, however, to keep the garrison military police phone number on hand in the rare case that communication is limited or a driver feels their rights are being violated.

All police in Germany have their respective contacts at each garrison, said Thomas Fink, Wiesbaden Police Directorate Deputy Director. So Polizei will be able to get in contact with Military Police, if necessary.

If a person identifies themselves as a police officer, but they are dressed in civilian clothes, drivers can ask for identification to show proof that they are who they say they are, Heinz said.

The officer will then check the driver for proper documents and may do a quick inspection to ensure that lights are working and that the driver is in

possession of a safety vest, warning triangle and first aid kit, he said.

"Keep the proper documents with you in your car, and as long as you follow the proper rules of the road, there's really nothing to be worried about," Onessimo said.

Another thing to note about traffic stops in Germany is that two officers typically ride in a car. One officer will communicate with the driver and the other will stand watch to keep the situation secure and may have a machine gun, Heinz said.

Certain routes are known criminal routes, so drivers may be pulled over simply for being on that route, he said. And police may use drug- or money-sniffing dogs.

The thing to remember is that when drivers cooperate, even if they have violated a law, things will go much more smoothly, Fink said. "Let police take the lead, relax and follow instructions."

## Document checklist

Any time Department of Defense personnel stationed here leave Germany in their POV, they should carry the following:

- Registration
- U.S. Forces Certificate of License (USAREUR license)
- Stateside driver's license
- DoD ID card
- Passport with accompanying SOFA card or leave form



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# Get to know your School Liaison Officer

## USAG Stuttgart School Liaison Office

The garrison's two School Liaison Officers, Joe Holder and Brian Pappas, can provide information about the five local Department of Defense Education Activity schools and assist families interested in homeschooling, international schools or German schools.

DoDEA schools in the Stuttgart military community area include three elementary schools, one middle school and one high school. Enrollment takes place directly at the school in the zone where you live and is ongoing throughout PCS season and into the school year.

To enroll students, sponsors need to complete specific school registration paperwork, provide a copy of assignment orders, immunization records, physical address, birth certificates for grades K-1 and a sports physical for students to participate in sports (parents can hand-carry school records in a sealed envelope). If you do not have sealed school records, the school registrar will request them from your child's previous school.

If you are temporarily staying at the Panzer Hotel, you can choose to enroll your elementary-age child at either Stuttgart or Patch Elementary School, otherwise your child's school is determined by the zone where you live.

Prior to the start of school, parents and students will have the opportunity to attend school orientations (specific information about the schedule will be

provided during summer). Supply lists for elementary students are available at each elementary school and at the Panzer Exchange. Middle and high school students will receive their supply lists after school begins.

If you have other questions or concerns, or if there is anything that the SLO can do to ease your transition to USAG Stuttgart, call 430-7465 or civ. 0711-6807465. The SLOs will do their best to connect you with your schools and community.

## School lunch program

All student meals are subsidized by the USDA. The rate of support varies by qualifying category. Free and reduced applications are now completed online, making the process quick and easy. Only one annual application per family is required. Once you submit your online application, you will receive confirmation of application status, typically within 24 hours. Your child's lunch account is automatically updated to reflect the free or reduced price status for the remainder of the current school year. Applications must be made annually.

Visit [www.aafes.com/about-exchange/school-lunch-program](http://www.aafes.com/about-exchange/school-lunch-program)

### Contact Information

#### Mailing Address:

Unit 30401, APO AE 09107

#### Telephone:

DSN 430-9337

Civ. 0711-680-9337

**Website:** <http://www.dodea.edu/RobinsonBarracksES/>

## Robinson Barracks Elementary School

Robinson Barracks Elementary School opened in 1953 in a building that previously held a military hospital for U.S. forces. The school has undergone several changes to its academic structure over the years, alternating between an elementary school and an elementary/middle school. Renovations and modernizations occurred in the late 1980s and early '90s. The school offers the standard DoDEA curriculum and provides extracurricular activities.

The school educates a student population of about 280 in

kindergarten through fifth grade, with a staff of approximately 45 teachers and administrators.

RBES values strong community school relationships that are essential to high academic achievement. It believes that successful schools include parents and community members that are involved and supportive. The community recognizes the value of educational and extracurricular activities, and RBES expects their students to excel both inside and outside of the classroom.



Contact Information

**Mailing Address:**  
Unit 30401 APO, AE 09107

**Telephone**  
DSN 430-7191  
Civ 0711-680-7191

**Website:**  
<http://www.dodea.edu/PatchMS/>

Patch Middle School

Patch Middle School (PMS) is the only middle school serving the entire Stuttgart military community, with approximately 650 students and 65 staff members.

PMS offers a diverse set of classes. In addition to the core subjects of math, science, languages and social studies, it offers many classes in art, music and technology to students in grades

6-8. Students have the opportunity to take advanced classes in foreign languages and mathematics. This challenging and engaging curriculum ensures that the students of PMS are on the path to be college and career ready

PMS offers varying extracurricular activities in art, astronauts, band, chess, debate, drama, jazz, robotics and more.



Contact Information

**Mailing Address:**  
Unit 30401, APO AE 09107

**Telephone**  
DSN 431-4900  
Civ 0703-115-4900

**Website:**  
<http://www.dodea.edu/PatchES/>

Patch Elementary School

Patch Elementary School was built in the 1930s. The school prides itself on a very active Parent-Teacher Association and School Advisory Committee, and emphasizes the partnership between the school and parents. PES offers the standard DoDEA K-5 curriculum, including a robust special needs program for both students with special needs, and gifted and talented students.

Temporarily located in Bldg. 2918 on Panzer Kaserne, PES serves

a student population of about 470 students with 75 teachers and administrators.

The school is set to return to its previous location on Patch Barracks once the new school project is complete. Extracurricular activities include running, yearbook, art and robotics clubs, yoga, chorus, "Just Dance" and a student council. The school's mascot is a stallion.

**Contact Information**  
  
**Mailing Address:**  
Unit 30401, APO, AE 09107  
  
**Telephone:**  
DSN 431-4100  
Civ. 0703-115-4100  
  
**Website:** <http://www.dodea.edu/StuttgartES/>



## Stuttgart Elementary School

Stuttgart Elementary School, previously known as Böblingen Elementary School, shares a new school complex on Panzer Kaserne with Stuttgart High School. It has a student population of about 630, with a staff of 70 teachers and administrators. SES believes in students, parents and community leaders working together in partnership with teachers. The school supports

programs that encourage parent involvement and building a strong parent-school partnership. Family nights, parent-teacher conferences, parent advisory groups, awards programs, classroom volunteers, parents as resource persons in the classroom and parent chaperones are just a few of the ways it's built an effective parent school partnership.

**Contact Information**  
  
**Mailing Address:**  
Unit 30401, APO, AE 09107  
  
**Telephone:**  
DSN 431-4000  
Civ. 0703-115-4000  
  
**Website:** <http://www.dodea.edu/StuttgartHS/>



## Stuttgart High School

Stuttgart High School (SHS) at Panzer Kaserne, originally founded as the Alexander M. Patch American High School in 1979, serves a student population of about 750 students with 55 teachers and administrators.

The school states it has the largest number of advance placement courses offered and the highest average AP scores in DoDEA. SHS offers a variety of the following DoDEA curriculum courses: English (including advanced placement and honors courses), mathematics (algebra through advanced placement

calculus), science (physics, chemistry, anatomy, biology, etc.), German, French and Spanish languages, computer courses, fine arts (humanities, band, art, chorus), history, business and career and technical electives, as well as other activities.

The school has an active Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps program, as well as extracurricular programs in football, golf, tennis, cross-country running, volleyball, wrestling, basketball, rifle marksmanship, swimming, cheerleading, track, soccer, baseball, softball and military drill team.



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# Heath care in Stuttgart explained

## USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs

The health system for service members, retirees, civilians and their families in Germany consists of local military community health services on Patch Barracks and Kelley Barracks, local host nation medical facilities for inpatient and outpatient primary and specialty care, and the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center (LRMC).

Upon arrival in Stuttgart, military personnel and their family members enrolled in Tricare Prime, should schedule a welcome appointment with your primary care manager to establish a relationship and ensure all preventive services are up to date. Service members need to in-process through Medical Readiness to ensure all immunizations, periodic health examinations, etc., are up to date.

The Stuttgart military community is served by the Stuttgart Army Health Clinic on Patch Barracks, the Kelley Barracks clinic annex and the Stuttgart Dental Clinic on Panzer Kaserne.

The health clinic provides health care using the patient-centered medical home model which is a team-based health care delivery model, led by a physician, physician's assistant, or nurse

practitioner, that provides comprehensive and continuous medical care to patients. The services offered at the health clinic include: primary care, pediatrics, behavioral health, optometry, physical therapy, wellness center, telehealth, and public health.

The Stuttgart Army Health Clinic does not provide emergency services; it relies on local German hospitals to provide emergency care. For this reason, in case of an emergency, do not go to the Stuttgart clinic. Dial 112 from a civilian phone to reach the German emergency services. From on-base DSN phones, dial 116 for the Military Police desk. The MPs can then contact additional emergency services as needed.

Care at the Patch and Kelley Clinic is provided based on enrollment status. Service members, and their command sponsored families have priority access to the clinic. All Retirees not already enrolled to the clinic along with civilians, contractors and their families should check in with the health clinic to determine if space is available at this time for them to receive care.

The Kelley Clinic Annex offers adult primary care, limited physical therapy, pharmacy refill pick up services and limited Tricare services.

## Dental Clinic

The dental clinic's primary mission is to provide dental treatment to service members. Other than active duty, such as family members, retirees and others, are seen on a space-available basis. The dental clinic provides general dentistry, as well as specialty care for pediatric dentistry, orthodontics, prosthodontics, periodontics and endodontics. Some oral surgery support is available at the clinic, but complex surgery is



Photo by John Reese  
**U.S. Army Dental Clinic on Panzer Kaserne.**  
referred to LRMC.

The Tricare Dental Plan was implemented to assist with dental care for family members and



Photo by Kevin S. Abel  
**The Stuttgart military community is served by the Stuttgart Army Health Clinic on Patch Barracks.**



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retirees. The plan is available worldwide both in and outside the continental U.S. Presently, MetLife is the insurance carrier (find more information at [mybenefits.metlife.com/Tricare](http://mybenefits.metlife.com/Tricare)).

## Host nation medical care

For some services, primary care providers may refer patients to host nation facilities, and the Stuttgart Army Health Clinic maintains relationships with an extensive network of English-speaking providers for specialty care on the German economy.

Tricare Prime beneficiaries should contact their primary care team for routine off-post referrals then contact International S.O.S.(ISOS) to obtain authorization. Host nation treatment facilities may refuse to see Prime beneficiaries without ISOS authorization for routine care. They should also notify ISOS for all emergency care authorization and billing issues. ISOS can be reached by telephone at CIV 0800-5891599 (toll-free from Germany) or Europe-wide at

0044-20-8762-8384 (international rates apply).

Those who are referred off-base should be aware that host nation medical clinics and hospitals have similar standards of care as those in the U.S. however, we may have culture differences. For example, the general approach to how pain is addressed after a surgery can be quite different than the care you are accustomed to in the U.S.

Though many host nation doctors speak English, their staff may or may not. If you do not speak German, take a bilingual dictionary with you or call Interpretation Services: The Language Line has more than 700 different languages DSN 590-8255 or 0018005231786, they system will then ask for your Client ID: 574003.

During rounds, junior physicians often accompany attending physicians. This can make it difficult for patients to feel comfortable asking questions. Write down your questions. During rounds, it is appropriate time to ask if the doctor has time to address all questions especially if you are requesting hospital discharge, pain management, or a question you need answered. If the doctor cannot answer at that time, ask when the doctor can return. Host nation patient liaisons should be able to assist if you are having difficulties communicating. Some German physicians may not be in the habit of explaining details to patients. They will answer all questions when asked, but sometimes do not volunteer all results or information. Be sure to ask doctors about the treatment plan.

German privacy standards may differ from what many Americans are used to, so please keep in mind that we are in their country. Host nation physicians may not always use a chaperone when examining patients of the opposite sex. Ask for a chaperone if you feel uncomfortable.

Generally, there are no privacy screens between beds. Do not wear transparent clothing. Take appropriate clothing that allows you to remain semi-dressed during an upper body exam. Patients may be asked to undress while nursing staff is passing through the area. This is considered

proper. Please be respectful of their standards but do not hesitate to inform the staff if you feel uncomfortable

## Landstuhl Regional Medical Center

LRMC is about a two-and-a-half-hour drive from the Stuttgart area. It offers a wide variety of specialty clinics and is a U.S. Level 1 trauma center verified by the American College of Surgeons. Major surgeries, specialty services and most other services not available at the Stuttgart clinics are available at LRMC. Visiting the specialty clinics at LRMC starts with a referral from Stuttgart's primary care providers.

## Telehealth and online services

The Telehealth Program directly connects geographically separated patients at U.S. Army Health Clinic Stuttgart with specialty care providers at LRMC via the use of video-conferencing. Patients can expect that advanced medical devices such as otoscopes, stethoscopes and general exam cameras to be used if applicable. This service can alleviate the need to travel to LRMC while still receiving the same specialty care. You may initiate a Telehealth referral by either obtaining a referral from a clinic provider or by self-referral.

The Stuttgart health clinic uses the online "Relay Health System", in addition to online services offered by Tricare, to maximize the health care services provided. Relay Health is an online messaging service that allows patients to contact their primary care provider and ask those questions, or receive advice that may not require an in-person appointment. This system is a secured messaging system and is a great way to get lab results, prescription refills or ask non-urgent medical questions. If you are out of refills on any of your medication, please know that your primary care manager may want to see you in the clinic before placing a new order for medications.

Tricare Online offers a way for eligible patients to schedule or cancel appointments at any time. Patients can even look at their lab results and submit medical bills online. For more information go to the Tricare website at [www.tricareonline.com](http://www.tricareonline.com). Note: To use this service, you have to registrar and create user ID and password. Patients are highly encourage to submit medical bill via [www.tricareonline.com](http://www.tricareonline.com)

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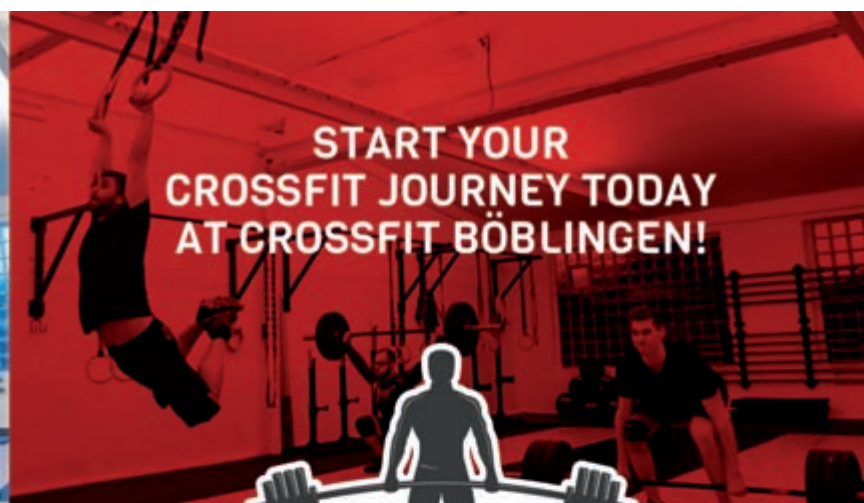


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# Caring for your pet overseas

*Moving to an overseas installation can be stressful for pets*

## USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs

What will their life in Stuttgart will be like? Is there a good veterinarian there? Are there dog parks? Can pets go downtown, into public places, or travel with the family on vacation? For those with four-legged family members to consider, the following tips may make the transition easier for all involved, even the family pet.

## Finding veterinary care providers

Upon arrival to Stuttgart, finding suitable veterinary care is simple. The Stuttgart Veterinary Treatment Facility offers space-available routine annual exams and services, dental and surgical procedures and over the counter pet health product sales.

Service members, Department of Defense civilians and family members are authorized to bring their pets to the clinic. For some families, it is more convenient to have their pet seen at a host nation veterinary clinic. Here in Stuttgart, pet owners can find several great clinics in the local area, including 24-hour emergency facilities, specialty hospitals where pets can receive advanced diagnostic and surgical care, and some excellent general practice veterinary clinics. Many German veterinarians speak English, so there is no need to worry about a language barrier disrupting a pet's medical care, and some also accept the VAT form.

In addition to veterinary clinics, Stuttgart also has a good selection of boarding facilities, pet stores and dog groomers.

## Know the rules

Living with pets in Germany can be a rewarding experience, as many local businesses allow well-behaved dogs inside their establishments. Dogs are often allowed to ride on the public transportation system at a discounted fair.

However, there are some laws governing animal ownership that might be new to people coming from the U.S. Certain breeds (for example, American Staffordshire terriers and bull terriers) are completely banned from entering Germany, and those attempting to import them can be fined or imprisoned while the animal can be deported or seized. Other breeds are restricted, meaning that they are permitted to be in Germany, but special precautions could be required, such as the dog wearing a muzzle when in public, undergoing temperament evaluation, or the owner may be required to take out a

special liability insurance policy on the pet. The list of breeds varies by city and state, so owners are encouraged to contact their local German town halls for additional information.

It is important for American personnel to understand that traditionally, pets in Germany have a high level of obedience training. Many regular pet owners, not just hobby pet-show competitors, take their dogs to a number of extensive training sessions. Obedience training is offered by several local dog clubs and many of the members speak English. Pets are often expected to be as self-disciplined and quiet as a very well-behaved child. An out of control pet is looked down upon in Germany. Additionally, leash laws and other pet-related ordinances in Germany can be more extensive and vary from town-to-town or county-to-county. Again, the local German town hall can be a good source of information on local ordinances and pet clubs that offer training.

## Traveling with a pet

Pet owners looking to travel with their pet while in Europe may be surprised to find just how easy and fun it can be. Within the European Union, an EU pet passport has been established that contains a brief history of a pet's vaccination records and important lab work.

This passport allows the pet to move with the owner

within most nations of the EU with ease. In most cases, travelers will not need to see a veterinarian for a health certificate like the one needed when traveling from the U.S. to Germany. As long as the passport is up-to-date and contains all of the necessary information, travelers can usually just get in the car and go.

EU pet passports are highly recommended as they greatly simplify the vacation travel process and help alleviate stress. A pet passport can only be obtained by visiting an off-base veterinarian, however, the Stuttgart VTF can and will annotate, in them, exam dates and immunizations received during an appointment.



Photo by Kevin S. Abel

**The Stuttgart Veterinary Treatment Facility, located on Panzer Kaserne, offers space-available routine annual exams and vaccinations, sick call appointments, and dental and surgical services.**



# Understanding SOFA, your legal status

**Stuttgart Law Center**  
USAG Stuttgart

As a newly-arrived member to the community, it is important to understand your legal status in Germany and your protections. Service members, civilians and family members on military orders are governed by the NATO Status of Forces Agreement. Understanding how the SOFA affects you will make for a more enjoyable overseas tour, and perhaps prevent unpleasant, potentially costly mistakes.

## NATO Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA)

The SOFA provides the basis for the legal status of military, U.S. civilian employees and dependents living in Germany on orders. Under an additional supplementary agreement, personnel in Germany also enjoy privileges not granted to others service members stationed elsewhere in Europe. These agreements affect status, entry and departure from the host nation, military training within host nation territory, jurisdiction, law enforcement, taxation, import and export laws, driving privileges, employment, mail, schooling, housing and much more.

## German law applies to everyone

Although the SOFA determines your legal status, it is important to understand that German law applies to U.S. personnel both on and off base. U.S. installations are not



Photo by Thinkstockphotos.com

**German law applies to service members, civilians, and families residing in Stuttgart, whether on- or off-post.**

U.S. soil. Additionally, while there are many similarities between German and U.S. law, there are also many stark differences. For example, spanking or paddling children as a means of punishment for disobedience is prohibited under German criminal law. German law considers it "physical punishment," which makes it tantamount to child abuse. German civil law also differs quite a bit from what most may be familiar with in the U.S. Additionally, make sure you attend the Legal in-processing brief offered weekly on Panzer Kaserne at the Central Processing Facility.

that is two years in the future.

Finally, keep a copy of termination notices and the company's response. Army Community Service can help with proactively terminating such services. An alternative to signing a contract is to get a prepaid plan.

## Host-Nation Relations

A number of issues can be avoided with a little deference to our German hosts and awareness of host-nation law.

For instance, in German culture, German citizens are encouraged to report inappropriate behavior parking in a no-parking area. If someone tells you that you are parked in the wrong spot, it would behoove you to move; small confrontations combined with a language barrier quickly escalate, resulting in police involvement, hefty fines and court costs. In Germany, if you flip someone off or use aggressive language toward someone else, you can be sued and forced to pay what is known as "Schmerzensgeld" or "pain money."

In Germany, folding, locking-blade knives and all knives with a blade longer than 12cm (4.7 inches) are generally banned. For more information, you can visit the German government's English translation of their weapons laws at their website [www.bmjjv.de](http://www.bmjjv.de). Click the top menu link for the English page, then scroll down and find the link to Translations of Statutes and Ordinances. The laws affecting knives are under WaffG, or Weapons Act. If you choose to carry a pocketknife, never carry it to a local fest, large public gatherings, places where alcohol is consumed and where there will be a police presence.

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## Contracts

Too often, Americans sign German documents without properly reviewing them. When considering, for example, a cellphone contract, don't sign it until someone who reads German reviews the documents, or if you don't understand your obligations. In Germany, many service contracts automatically renew for one-year increments after the initial two-year expiration. You must give proper written notice to terminate the contract; for example, if you fail to give proper written notice of termination leaving, you could be on the hook for an extra year of cellphone service after leaving Germany. It is possible to send the notice with an effective date that is well in the future. For instance, notice could be sent as early as a month after service begins, but have an effective date

## Traffic laws

Speed cameras are much more common in Stuttgart and throughout Germany than they are in the U.S. Unfortunately, the Law Center lacks legal authority to assist drivers who received a speeding ticket or other traffic citation. Prompt payment of the fines is highly recommended.

The U.S. Army in Europe vehicle registry records German traffic violations and assigns traffic points. Drivers who get 12 or more traffic points in a one-year period face a mandatory license suspension under the Army in Europe Regulations. Those caught driving on a suspended license face a five-year revocation of driving privileges.

## Downloading Media Online

German copyright laws are strictly enforced and our community has seen a surge in demand letters from law firms for illegal downloading of protected material. Such demand letters can involve heavy fees or fines imposed on those caught downloading or uploading media in violation of German copyright laws. The best practice is not to engage in any illegal downloading or uploading of copyrighted materials.

Those who receive a document that appears to be a legal notice concerning downloading or uploading copyrighted materials should contact the Law Center prior to responding to the letter.

## Tax-free privileges

The SOFA affords some very nice tax breaks to personnel under orders to be in Germany. Sharing these tax breaks with non-SOFA protected persons are strictly prohibited. Violations can cost a person their SOFA privileges, or worse, result in federal criminal convictions. Specifically, misuse of the fuel ration system or VAT exemption can create trouble very quickly. Also, anything acquired under the provisions of the SOFA at the Exchange, commissary or tax-exempt purchases made with a VAT form, are for personal use and are not allowed to be used in private business ventures. Don't allow landlords to use VAT forms to repair or improve their property. Those interested in getting involved in a personal business while overseas under the SOFA are highly encouraged to consult the Installation Commercial Affairs Office.

## Marriage

Marriage and divorce in Germany can be quite different than the U.S. Marriage or divorce documents are not easily transferred or mutually applied between German authorities and various states in the U.S. Any divorce,

whether overseas or back in the U.S., can be very complicated and could cost hundreds of thousands of dollars for alimony, child support, division of marital assets, and legal fees. Former spouses could seek a court order for money, call your commander to enforce a separation agreement, or any obligation under military regulations to support families. Since the Law Center cannot represent personnel in divorces, you will have to seek services from a German attorney.

Your tour in Germany can be a very enjoyable experience; make the most of it by staying out of legal trouble. Know and respect the laws and our German hosts.

## Renting off-post quarters

Personnel must check-in at the Housing Services Office within two days of arrival in Stuttgart and keep them informed of their housing search status at all times.

Those residing off-post must be thorough and businesslike when establishing a contract and moving in. Landlord-tenant laws are very different in Germany and are, in many ways, pro-landlord. Keep all meetings with the landlord, at least the initial ones, strictly businesslike.

One key difference between U.S. landlord-tenant law and Germany landlord-tenant law is that you can form an oral contract to rent property in Germany. This means you must watch what you say to a prospective landlord or realtor when discussing a property.

Once you find a place, note all preexisting damage on the inspection sheet provided by the Housing Office. Don't rely on anyone else to note deficiencies. Anything you don't annotate on your initial inspection will be attributed to you when the time arrives for your departure date. You'll be personally responsible for repairs that aren't notated on the initial inspection sheet. You can pay for the repairs out your own pocket or from your security deposit. It is critical to remember that renting property is a business transaction.

Also, be careful when dealing with realtors. Realtors technically work for the potential renter seeking the property, but they are very familiar with the local landlords. Landlords often have more than one rental property and if their tenants are Americans, new tenants rotate through their properties every two to three years. This reality means

realtors often take sides with the landlord during landlord-tenant disputes. Additionally, there may be hefty realtor fees associated with a property. In almost all cases, realtor fees are not reimbursable. Check with the housing office before contacting a realtor.

### Stuttgart Law Center

**Location:** Kelley Barracks, Bldg 3312, 2nd Floor, Room 215

**Commercial Telephone:**  
+49(0) 711-729-4152 / 2609

**Defense Switched Network (DSN):**  
(314) 421-4152 / 2609

**Hours of operation:** Mon.–Wed., 9 a.m.–12 p.m.; 1–4:30 p.m., Thurs. 1–4:30 p.m., & Fri. 9 a.m.–12 p.m.; 1–2 p.m. Closed for lunch and U.S. federal holidays and USAREUR training holidays. SOFA and more

You can read about the SOFA and the Supplemental Agreement at  
<https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/111621.pdf>

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**Allianz**

# Tax relief found under SOFA

## USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs

Taxes in Germany can be much higher than in the U.S. However, service members, civilian employees and family members who fall under the Status of Forces Agreement are eligible for a variety of tax relief that can provide significant savings.

## VAT

The first and most common form of tax relief is from the tax known as Value Added Tax (VAT). VAT is imposed by Germany on a wide variety of goods bought or sold in Germany. While amounts can vary for certain items, most retail goods are taxed at 19 percent. This tax is already calculated into the advertised price of retail goods, so the amount on the price tag includes the tax, and is what most customers pay for the item at the register. Significant money can be saved from the advertised price by removing the VAT.

### *Purchases €2,499 and below*

For purchases less than €2,500 net price after removing the VAT, a simple VAT form NF-1 is completed together by customer and the retailer, with the customer keeping the pink and white pages of the form and the retailer or vendor keeps the remaining pages of the form. Customers then reconcile the forms by providing the white copy to the VAT office while keeping the pink copy for their own records. Retailers are not required to accept the form or offer tax relief, but many do. Typically, retailers near military installations are more familiar with the forms. For retailers who have not used the form before, the VAT Office offers an information sheet in German that explains the retailer's use of the form. VAT forms may be purchased for \$5 per NF-1 form, and each sponsor may only have 10 open forms out at any one time.

VAT forms can't be used for costs related to buying or selling real estate, or for the purchase of automobiles that will not be registered in the USAEUR vehicle registration system. They also can't be used for any items used in a commercial activity (such as a home business), long-term utility, telephone and Internet contracts.

### *Purchases of €2,500 or more*

For purchases of more than €2,499, consumers must get a NF-2 VAT form. This form costs \$65, and there are more restrictions and a process that must be followed correctly or the consumer may end up not being able to get tax relief for the purchase in question. Most importantly, before making any legal commitment to purchase an item over €2,500, contact the VAT Office to start the process. These forms cannot be used after



Photo by Kevin S. Abel

**Value Added Tax forms are closed by turning in the white copy or dropping it off in the VAT boxes located inside the mail rooms.**

the purchase has been made or ordered, and in most cases, the purchase is actually made by the buyer in conjunction with the servicing VAT Office.

Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation Services must actually be named on the purchase documents (they may be listed as 'FMWR services'). Those considering large purchases should contact the VAT office for more information, prior to making a purchase.

### **Tax relief hours**

Find relief at the Tax Relief Office, Bldg. 2915, Panzer Kaserne. The VAT office is open Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m., and Fridays 8 a.m. – 6 p.m., and the UTAP office is open weekdays 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

## UTAP

Some personnel are eligible for relief from utility taxes through the Utility Tax Avoidance Program. Enrollment in this program may be mandatory for some personnel receiving housing or living quarters allowances and can save enrollees significant money over the course of several years.

The UTAP office has established relationships with most of the regional service providers, and can help customers enroll in the program. There is a fee of \$99 for enrollment. The application form should be filled out ahead of time and is available for download at <http://stuttgart.armymwr.com/europe/stuttgart/programs/utap>.

## Prohibited practices

Use of VAT forms is a privilege extended to personnel under the SOFA, but while the program is based on rules that were provided to the US Forces by the German Government authorities, there are restrictions on the use of VAT forms. To avoid losing VAT relief privileges, avoid the following prohibited practices:

- Using an un-priced purchase order (NF-1) for any amount of €2,500 or more.
- Using an un-priced (NF-1) or priced (NF-2) purchase order that has an issue date after the designated agent (customer) "order date," vendor's delivery date, or date of invoice (A VAT form must be obtained prior to initiating/ordering a service or buying an item).
- Splitting invoice amounts between two or more un-priced (NF-1) purchase orders to avoid using a priced (NF-2) purchase order for an amount of €2,500 or more.
- Purchasing goods or services that benefit ineligible persons.
- Buying used automobiles, repair parts or services for resale. This activity is considered "trading in the commercial sector" and is illegal, regardless of who buys the automobile, parts or service.
- Buying items for resale or other commercial purposes. This activity is considered "trading in the commercial sector" and is illegal in conjunction with tax relief, regardless of who buys the items or services offered.
- Buying new or used automobiles from German vendors for registration in the German (or other non-U.S. Forces) vehicle registration system (Kfz-Zulassung).
- Using VAT forms for costs related to buying or selling real estate.
- Using VAT forms for construction, renovation or home repair costing €2,500 or more without IMCOM-Europe prior approval, and for unauthorized repairs or renovations below €2,500.
- Using VAT forms for utilities or telecommunication services based on long-term contracts.
- Making other purchases that are prohibited by AE Regulation 215-6/USAFE Instruction 34-102.
- Returning VAT forms that are not completed properly (for example, amount in Box 4, signature in Boxes 7 or 10, dates in Boxes 8 or 11, Box 12, Box 13).
- Using an expired VAT form (VAT forms are valid for two years from the date of purchase). Issue/expiration dates are identified in block 3, on the top-right side of the purchased VAT form, (AE Form 215-6B).

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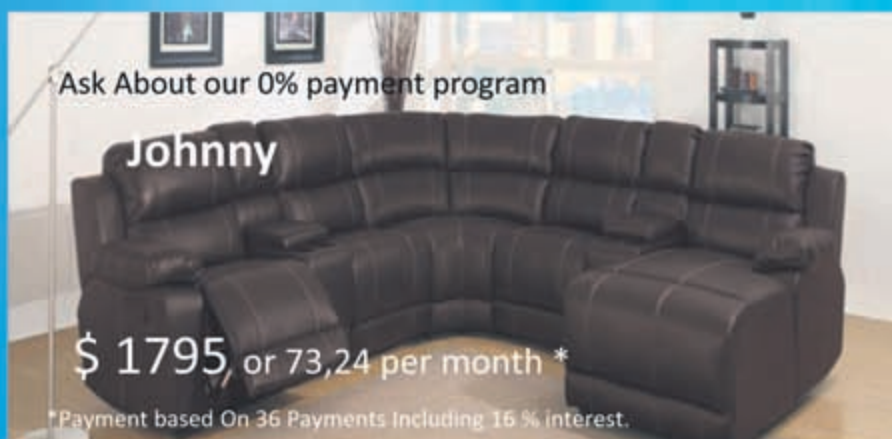
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# Religious services in Stuttgart community

## Religious Support Office USAG Stuttgart

The U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart Religious Support Office attempts to meet the needs of different faiths by providing many different religious services.

The Stuttgart military community is one of many faiths. Traditional Protestant services, including liturgical, contemporary Christian and gospel worship services are offered on Sundays. Catholic Mass is celebrated throughout the week across the Stuttgart military community, while Jewish services are held the first and third Friday of the month in the Panzer Chapel.

In addition to a wide variety of religious worship services, the RSO also provides religious education activities including Bible studies, children's church, youth groups, vacation Bible school and more.

Chapels are located on Patch Barracks in Bldg. 2305, Robinson Barracks in Bldg. 115 and Panzer Kaserne in Bldg. 2940.

The full schedule of services is available at the USAG Stuttgart website at [www.stuttgart.army.mil/services-rso.html](http://www.stuttgart.army.mil/services-rso.html).

All phone numbers are local DSN followed by the commercial phone numbers.

## Panzer Kaserne

## USAG Stuttgart Command

## Local Dining

*Continued from p. 11*

### Java Café — Bldg. 2325

Starbucks coffee, smoothies, sandwiches, wraps, soup, and much more  
Hours: Weekdays, 6 a.m. – 6 p.m., Saturday 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

### The Backlot Bar — Bldg. 2345

Full service bar  
Hours: Monday to Thursday 4 – 11 p.m., Fridays 4 p.m. – 1 a.m., Saturdays 4 p.m. to 2 a.m., Sundays 4 p.m. – midnight

### Patch Community Club

— Bldg. 2345  
Burgers, chicken, mozzarella sticks, egg rolls, and much more  
Hours: 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., Monday to Friday; 4 to 11

**Chaplain:**  
431-3079 or 07031 15 3079

**Deputy Command Chaplain:**  
431-3027 or 07031 15 3027

**RSO administrator/chapel coordinator:**  
431-3079 or 07031 15 3079

**NCOIC:**  
431-2081 or 07031 15 2081

**Resource manager:**  
431-3069 or 07031 15 3069

**Fund manager:**  
431-3074 or 07031 15 3074

**Chaplain resource management assistant:**  
431-3075 or 07031 15 3075

**Director of Religious Education:**  
431-3071 or 0703115-3071

**Family Life Chaplain:**  
431-3030 or 07031 15 3030

**1st Battalion, 10th Special Force Group Chaplain:**  
431-2313 or 07031 15 2313

## Patch Barracks

**Catholic Chaplain:**  
430-9213 or 0711 680-9213

**Catholic Parish coordinator:**  
430-8352 or 0711 680-8352

**Patch Chapel coordinator:**  
430-9215 or 0711 680 9215

**USAG Chapel Youth Leaders:**  
430-7237 or 0711 680 7237

p.m., Monday to Thursday; and 4 p.m. to midnight, Friday and Saturday.

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## Bible Church of Stuttgart

*Holding Forth the Word of Life Phil. 2:16*

Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Sunday Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.  
Fellowship Coffee 10:30 a.m. Thursday Prayer Meeting 7:00 p.m.

Pastor Kai Hoess | cell: 0174-300-6632 | office: 0711-93388243  
Schockenriedstrasse 42 | 70565 Vaihingen  
[www.bible-church-of-stuttgart.com](http://www.bible-church-of-stuttgart.com)



Photo by Kevin S. Abel

Chapels are located on Patch Barracks in Bldg. 2305, Robinson Barracks in Bldg. 115 and Panzer Kaserne in Bldg. 2940.

## Family counseling

Confidential counseling services for families struggling with a wide variety of issues are available at the Stuttgart Family Life Center, adjacent to the Panzer Chapel. To schedule an appointment, call 431-3030/civ. 07031-15-3030.

For more

information on the RSO or difficult-to-find faith-based services, contact the RSO at 431-3079/civ. 07031-15-3079.

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70565 Vaihingen**  
**Pastor F. Moser**  
Pastor's Phone: 0160-9278-8754  
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# Make friends by volunteering or joining community organizations

## USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs

Volunteer opportunities through Army Community Service or with private organizations come with many benefits, including the gaining valuable experience on par with employment experience. ACS or private organizations and the volunteers who champion them play a big role in the U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart military community, from youth programs, to spouse and unit support, to veteran care, education, networking and personal growth and readiness.

Volunteers can learn new skills by exploring different careers, make new friends in the Stuttgart military community and develop networking opportunities to jumpstart careers, plus adding experience to a resume or scholarship application.

Agencies throughout Stuttgart are always on the lookout for new volunteers. The American Red Cross, USO, youth sports and the award-winning Stuttgart Theatre Center are just a few of the opportunities available.

The Volunteer Management Information System through Army OneSource tracks volunteer hours for volunteer service medals and the annual volunteer recognition ceremony.

ACS also offers free employment classes to all ID cardholders in the Stuttgart community to build your resume, improve confidence and easily navigate the USAJobs website.

## Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteer and Professional Organizations:

- United Service Organizations (USO)
- American Red Cross Stuttgart Station
- Stuttgart Community Spouses' Club (SCSC), this group also runs the Patch Thrift Shop.
- Americans Working Around the Globe (AWAG)
- Professional Certification Board of Alcohol and Drug Counselors-Germany

### School organizations:

- Stuttgart Elementary School PTA
- Patch Elementary School PTA
- Robinson Barracks Elementary PTSA
- Patch Middle School PTSA
- Stuttgart High School PTO
- Stuttgart High School Music Booster Club

### Scout Troops

- Boy Scouts (Venture Crew 44 and Troops 44, 113, 119, 254, 324)
- Cub Scouts (Packs 44, 113, 324, 154)
- USA Girl Scouts Overseas

## Sports Organizations

- Competitive Athletic Sports Europe
- National Ski Patrol System (NSPS), European Division
- Patch Ski Club
- Piranhas Swim Team for youth
- Sitzmarkers Ski and Board Club
- Stuttgart American Little League
- Stuttgart Eagles Basketball Club for youth
- Stuttgart German-American Wandering Club that hosts "volksmarch" walking trails and trips.
- Stuttgart Ski Patrol
- United States Youth Soccer

## Service Member Organizations

- Adjutant General's Corps regimental • Association, Subchapter Stuttgart (AGCRA-S)
- American Society of Military Comptrollers (ASMC)
- Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association (AFCEA)
- ECJ1 Booster Club
- OutService-Servicemembers Legal Defense Network (OS-SLDN)
- Screamin' Wyverns – Navy
- Special Forces Association, Chapter V
- Stuttgart Area Top III Association – Air Force
- Stuttgart Petty Officers' Association of Stuttgart/Stuttgart Chief Petty Officers' Association (SCPOA)
- Stuttgart Rising 6 – Air Force
- Stuttgart Semper Fi Club - Marines
- Stuttgart Special Operations

Association (SSOA)

## Veteran Organizations

- American Legion Stuttgart Post #6
- Harold Washington Military Lodge #128
- Mozart Military Lodge #69
- Stuttgart Military Lodge #581
- Stuttgart Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post #10810

### Groups that organize annual service branch balls:

- Organization 1775 (Army)
- Stuttgart Ball Committee (Air Force)
- Stuttgart Zumwalt Ball Committee (Navy)
- Volunteer and Professional Organizations:
- Stuttgart Community Spouses' Club (this group runs the Patch Thrift Shop)
- Americans Working Around the Globe
- Professional Certification Board of Alcohol and Drug Counselors-Germany

## Career and Transition Assistance

Association of the United States Army (AUSA): In addition to the Soldier For Life program available to all service members of any branch within USAG Stuttgart, and the Army Community Service Employment Readiness Programs also open to dependents and civilians, AUSA aids in employment transition assistance and job placement. AUSA hosts a job fair on-post each year to connect retiring military community members, dependents and civilians, with career and transition guidance.

## Cultural Heritage, Fraternal or Religious Organizations

- Alice R. Matthews Chapter #77
- Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc., Theta Theta Lambda Chapter
- Benjamin Brown Chapter #122
- Black Forest Quilt Guild (BFQG)
- Blacks In Government
- District Eight Knights Templar
- Donald H. Coleman Consistory #329
- Elmer T. Hawkins Lodge #113
- Germany Alumnae Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority
- Harriet R. Tubman Chapter #40
- James C. Baker Jr. Council #4
- Kappa Alpha Psi
- Knights of Columbus-Chaplain Charles Watters Council #8792
- NAACP Stuttgart Branch #2343
- Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., Theta Rho International Chapter
- Philippine American German Association of the Stuttgart Area (PAGASA)
- Pyramid Lodge #238, F&AM Prince Hall Affiliated

# FMWR offers a wide variety of services

**Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation**  
USAG Stuttgart

The U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation operates more than 46 facilities across four installations and a golf course to provide a wide variety of programs and services for all ages and interest groups.

It is committed to the well-being of the community of people who serve and stand ready to defend the nation, said Andrea Stauffer, marketing director, Stuttgart FMWR.

“Our goal is to enhance the lives of service members, their families, civilian employees and retirees,” Stauffer said.

Keeping the military resilient and ready to fight takes more than hard work and training — it takes a balance of work and play. According to Stauffer, that is where FMWR fits into the picture.

“We try to focus our programs on meeting the physical, social, spiritual, emotional and family needs of our military community,” she said. “It’s all about providing a balance to increase readiness and resiliency so our customers can enjoy all that Europe has to offer while stationed overseas.”

FMWR employs more than 400 staff members and consists of five divisions that provide a wide variety of services to the community.

## Community recreation and more

FMWR operates four fitness centers; two libraries; the Auto Skills Shop, including a motorcycle storage, vehicle lubrication and a dog wash; Outdoor Recreation; the Warrior Zone; the Broadway Cafe; Better Opportunities for Single Service Members; the award-winning Stuttgart Theatre Center; and arts and crafts programs.

Additionally, the recreation division coordinates a number of special community-wide events, such as the winter market, Community Activities, Registration and Education Fair and the Independence Day celebration. Other special event productions include comedy shows, musical performances and special acts.

Other activities include the recently renovated 7,000 yard, 18-hole, par 72 golf course and its storage facility near Robinson Barracks; the 24-lane Galaxy Bowling and Entertainment Center on Panzer Kaserne; the Patch Community Club, Java Cafe and the Swabian Special Events Center on Patch Barracks; and the Kelley Club on Kelley Barracks.

The FMWR business division works closely with Army Lodging at the Panzer and Kelley Hotels, which normally operate at a 95 percent occupancy rate.



Photo by Kevin S. Abel

**U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation Division hosts activities that include bike races in the local training area.**

## Army Community Service

ACS, located in Bldg. 2915, Panzer Kaserne, provides assistance and education through Army Emergency Relief, Army Family Action Plan, Army Family Team Building, Volunteer Corps, Employment and Financial Readiness, Family Advocacy, Exceptional Family Member Program, information, Referral and Follow-Up Program, Outreach Program, Soldier and Family Assistance Center, Military Life Consultants, Mobilization and Deployment Readiness and Relocation Readiness.

“If you need assistance or a resource for just about anything, ACS is there to help. In USAG Stuttgart, Army Community Service is the family center for all branches of the military” said Tawania Kovacs, director, Stuttgart ACS.

## Child, Youth and School Services

The largest division within FMWR is the Child, Youth and School Services division. Parents with children will likely engage with one or more of the services provided by CYS.

Services include the child development centers; Strong Beginnings; part-day preschool; school-age and middle school programs; Schools of Knowledge, Inspiration, Exploration, Skills Unlimited and youth sports; CYS Services provides accredited programs, education and fun for the whole family.

CYS cares for children so that parents can focus on the mission while they are at work. Special after-hours care is frequently provided so that parents can take a break to enjoy other activities taking place on and off post.

## Non-Appropriated Funds

The NAF division maintains the FMWR machine by providing overhead support in the way of marketing, commercial sponsorship and advertising, financial management, supply and warehousing functions, internal controls and property accountability, and information technology support for facilities, computers, point-of-sale sites and management information-systems. Many of these areas may seem unglamorous, but they are necessary to ensure all of the programs and services operate without a hitch.



Photo by Kevin S. Abel

**U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation Division hosts activities that include paintball in the local training area.**



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# Getting around via public

## USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs

Public transport in Germany and throughout Europe is the ideal way to travel. The German transit system service is a vast, extensive network of stations that are accessible, most within walking distance, of almost everywhere within the Stuttgart area.

Buying tickets can be done at stations or online. One option is to download the Verkehrs Verbund Stuttgart (VVS) mobile app. There you can set up an account which stores your credit card information to purchase tickets on the go. Once purchased, the app stores a bar code which can be shown to ticket checkers to scan by request as proof of purchase. An email receipt is also automatically sent to you as an alternate proof of purchase including the barcode. Just be sure to keep your phone charged while you're on the train.

For ticketing information on local and regional trains, ticket machines are available at each station stop to purchase a paper ticket. While some have a touch screen interface, many older platform machines have codes to enter in to determine your zone and ticket type. (more on navigating zones below).

Ticket machines at most train stations not only sell tickets but also offer information about schedules, delays and services available. Travelers can also print up a travel itinerary free of charge. Not all machines may accept credit cards so it is always recommended to carry euros, or use the mobile app which can link to your credit card.

The entire Deutsche Bahn network and most of the regional networks operate on the honor system. Travelers purchase tickets and step onto the train without a gate or an attendant checking the ticket upon entry. Passengers with paper tickets must stamp their ticket on the train when using U-Bahn local transit, or at the station platform or entrance to the train station when taking S-Bahn or regional trains. Not having a valid ticket will result in fines.

Conductors periodically check for tickets and the fines for riding without a ticket can be very hefty. It is important for travelers to make sure they have valid tickets for each and every trip, no matter how short.

Occasionally ticket machines may be inoperable, so aside from using the mobile app, buy some of the four-pass paper tickets in advance to keep on hand, especially when visitors are in town. They are good unstamped for one year and transferable to anyone.

The three levels of transit services work together to connect to nearly every city, town or village in Germany. Stops and stations may be serviced by multiple transit agencies or just a single company, mainly VVS that operates S-Bahn lines, U-Bahn lines, Strassenbahn (streetcar) and a variety of bus lines.

You can book through the Bahn office using a VAT tax form, or online for long distance travel and express trains between cities and bordering countries such as France and Austria.

S-Bahn red trains are for short-distance and express service within a



Photo by Kevin S. Abel

**The German transit system service is a vast, extensive network of stations that are accessible, most within walking distance, of almost everywhere within the Stuttgart area. S-Bahn trains are for short-distance and express service within a region and available near most Stuttgart Military Installations.**

region. An S-Bahn train is a no-frills commuter train without toilets or concessions.

A Regiobahn (regional) train, also red, is for any distance within a region and can be very cost-effective. It has toilets (not to be used when the train is at a station) and some trains have a concessions cart with coffee and snacks.

The white ICE (InterCity Express) trains with fewer stops are for long distances, to include neighboring countries. ICE train seats may be reserved, including specifics like having a window seat with a table or a quieter compartment, plus they have WiFi, a dining (bistro) car and a cart with food and beverages will make periodic trips past your seat. The local U-Bahn trains and city buses are also partially serviced by DB to provide localized transport between cities and stations within in the region. Service routes range from Weil der Stadt to Rudersberg Oberndorf and Ludwigsburg to Filderstadt.

## Navigating the transit systems

Transit line maps are available at station platforms, online and within the mobile apps. Local train travel in Stuttgart is broken down by zones and are generally learned as you go.

Examples travelling to downtown Stuttgart:

- From Boeblingen (Near Panzer Kaserne): 4 zones
- From Vaihingen (Near Patch Barracks): 3 zones
- From Mohringen (Near Kelley Barracks): 2 zones
- From Robinson Barracks area stations: 2 zones
- From downtown Stuttgart, Hauptbahnhof main station to the Stuttgart Airport: 3 zones

## Not all tickets are created equal

The key to car-free European adventures is knowing your options and how to get the local deals.

A 4-pass paper ticket is available at machines. This ticket is good for four

# transportation in Germany

train rides within the purchased zones. Unstamped tickets are good for one year.

•A short-trip ticket is for passengers travelling within under three U-Bahn stops.

•A day ticket, available on all local trains within a selected zone, is good all day.

•A group day ticket is good for more than one person, up to 5 people.

Though it sounds easy enough, simply buying a ticket, when combined with the language barrier and the not-so-consistent ticket machines can be overwhelming. When all else fails, ask the experts to help you get started.

Several bread-and-butter deals are always available at the ticket kiosks. The following are by no means an exhaustive list, but should get travelers off on the right foot.

The Bahn office is located at the Stuttgart main station downtown, and also in the main stations in Vaihingen near Patch Barracks and the Boeblingen station near Panzer Kaserne. Agents there can help you find the best fares travel. You can also purchase weekly, monthly and yearly local train passes. The Bahn offices accept VAT forms, best used when booking costly or multiple trips. there's a two-euro fee for purchasing in-person, but it is a small price to pay when you consider the VAT form.

## BahnCards

BahnCards are a fantastic deal for travelers who use the train frequently and can pay for themselves on the first purchase. Before purchasing a ticket to travel outside of Stuttgart, ask about how

getting a BahnCard 25 or 50 would affect the price.

With a BahnCard 25, travelers get 25 percent off all regular and saver fares. DB often publishes trial offers, like a card for 19 euros that is valid for three months (or similar promotions you can use to test out) if buying a card for the year is worth it to you or not.

With a BahnCard 50, travelers receive 50 percent off all regular purchases (but not saver fares). This card is best for travelers who use the train several times each month outside of Stuttgart.



Although there's no substitute for good advance planning, many of the standing ticket offers through Deutsche Bahn provide flexibility for the spontaneous traveler. Taking the train offers several benefits and can even be a viable, inexpensive option when traveling in a group.

A car may get you there quicker, but getting there faster isn't always the best way to travel.

## Baden-Württemberg Regional Ticket

BW tickets apply to regional trains, not ICE, and your train must depart after 9 a.m. on weekdays. This ticket is perfect for day trips on regional trains and the S-Bahn for solo travel or with a group of friends. The ticket is good for up to five people. You must write your name on the ticket. Make sure your train will arrive before the ticket expires.

## Quer-durchs-Land and Schönes-Wochenende Ticket window

The Quer-durch-Land (across the country) ticket offers unlimited regional train travel for one day throughout Germany, Monday-Friday. Like the BW Pass, it's good for up to five people. The Schönes-Wochenende (beautiful weekend) ticket is good for travel on weekends. Up to five people can travel using this ticket.

# Experience Swabian politics through CCVP

## USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs

Several times per year, a group of service members, DoD civilians and family members from the U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart community have the opportunity spend a day downtown as guests of the state parliament, state government and the City of Stuttgart.

Since 1993, the Capital City Visitation Program has increased German-American contact and provided an overview of the German state of Baden-Württemberg. Participants are from all services, ranks and units stationed within the garrison footprint. It is an excellent opportunity to learn the history shared by the U.S. Forces and the local government. The tour emphasizes the crucial role the U.S. played in reconstructing war-torn Germany and providing it with its present day democratic constitution.

The program begins at the state parliament, with a presentation on the political structure and current political situation as well as a comparison to the U.S. political system. The presentation will also include a film



about the State of Baden-Württemberg. A luncheon is hosted for participants after visiting parliament.

A guided walking tour to the adjacent State Theater, Neues Schloß and Altes Schloß, and the Market Hall of Stuttgart. The program concludes with a reception at city hall with the lord mayor or his personal envoy.

The presentation at city hall includes a film showing some of the highlights of the city of Stuttgart and the state of Baden-Württemberg. Participants receive informative handouts in the form of brochures and books covering a myriad of topics on history, politics and culture, as well as taking a light-hearted look at interesting cultural differences between Germans and Americans.

The tour is the participants place of duty for that day in civilian attire. This tour is not designed for children.

### Sign up for the CCVP

Service members, DoD civilians and family members interested in taking the tour must sign up for the tour at [usarmy.stuttgart.id-europe.mbx.usag-stuttgart-media@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.stuttgart.id-europe.mbx.usag-stuttgart-media@mail.mil)

# Donate, shop or volunteer at the SCSC Thrift Store

By Katie Whisler

Stuttgart Community Spouses' Club

Moving to a new country can be exciting and overwhelming all at the same time. The financial burden can become a difficult challenge when trying to replace those small American appliances for German ones, trying to find new pieces to fit your home abroad and maybe even wanting to spruce up your wardrobe.

The Stuttgart Community Spouses' Club Thrift Shop, has it all and more. In addition to selling practical items, the Thrift Shop resembles a mini-world bazaar since military families donate items from all around the world.

The Thrift Store's mission statement uses three tenants of equal importance (shop, donate, volunteer): We will offer a quality thrift shop, not for our benefit but for the benefit of the Stuttgart military community and, in working side by side, develop relationships through fellowship, service and mutual respect."

There are tons of affordable and unique items. The Thrift Shop strongly believes in a green approach using reduce, re-use, recycle, and uses it as an opportunity to upcycle.

Donations are its foundation. The Thrift Shop runs strictly off donations from generous members of the community. Whether you are PCSing into Stuttgart and don't have room for everything you brought with you, or you are PCSing out and need to get rid of a few things you've collected over the years, the Thrift Shop is there for you.

## How can you donate

It is always best to donate during open hours to thank donors in person; it is also easier for the staff to process donations and answer any questions about the donating process.

If you are unable to donate during business hours, there's a 24/7 donation shed. Please ensure all donations are placed inside the shed. It's illegal to leave them outside the shed and donated items may be ruined by the ever-changing Stuttgart weather.

Donations are processed daily at the shop, so with the array of great merchandise at bargain prices, it is never the same shopping experience twice. This is part of the fun and adventure of visiting the Thrift Shop. Each donation that comes into the shop is thoroughly checked by associates and volunteers. We do our best to put great merchandise onto our sales floor. Donations that we can't accept (e.g. broken/soiled items or out of season clothing) are either disposed of or re-donated to other worthy organizations.

The Thrift Store doesn't accept mattresses and box springs, TVs, VHS players, cassette tapes, car seats and helmets, drop-side cribs, auto parts, gasoline-powered items, uniforms and military gear, liquid gas of any kind and food. Contact the Stuttgart Environmental Division at 0711-7228-6131 to dispose of these items properly.

## How can you get involved?

Volunteers are the heart of the SCSC Thrift Shop. Without them, it wouldn't be able to run the shop like it is. The Thrift Shop is always in need of dynamic, friendly and benevolent volunteers.

As a volunteer, you can make a measurable difference in our community, learn valuable skills, find meaning in your work, become part of a great group and community and most importantly have fun and meet new



Photo by Kevin S. Abel

**The Stuttgart Community Spouses' Club Thrift Shop is located on Patch Barracks and offers quality thrift items for sale for the benefit of the Stuttgart military community.**

people! Getting started as a volunteer is easy. Speak to any team members in a red apron and ask for a volunteer application. New volunteers receive a 30-minute orientation explaining procedures and a tour of the store. Volunteers are never put on a schedule. Hours are flexible and time commitments can vary, but shifts should be at least one hour. Anyone over the age of 14 may volunteer (ages 12 and up are welcome with a parent).

## Finally, the best part: Shopping

The Thrift Shop slogan is "Best Day Ever," because every day is a good day at the shop.

Shopping at the Thrift Shop is a win-win situation. It's a way to give back to the community while getting something fun for yourself, as all proceeds go right back into the community. Last year alone, the SCSC raised \$387,670 that helped fund scholarships, military balls, youth sports and many other organizations within the Stuttgart community.

Innovative annual projects include the Homecoming & Prom Event and the beloved Thriftmas Market.

The Homecoming & Prom Event is exclusive for girls to come in and try on dresses that the Thrift Shop saved especially for them to find that perfect dress for their special night. Girls spend the evening with their friends and female team members munching on popcorn and sipping lemonade in a relaxed and supportive environment.

The Thriftmas Market is the Thrift Shop's biggest event of the year. The shop closes for one week to completely transform the store into a winter wonderland. Each year brings a different theme sure to bring Christmas cheer to the Stuttgart community.

Stop by and shop. Remember, SCSC membership cardholders and junior enlisted service members and their family members receive a 30 percent discount off of regular priced items.

### SCSC Thrift Shop hours of operation

Monday - 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Tuesday - Closed

Wednesday - 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Thursday – 3 p.m. – 7 p.m.

Friday- 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

1st & 3rd Saturdays 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Additionally, during summer PCS season (June-August), the SCSC Thrift Shop will be open every Saturday from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Stop by, email [patchthriftshop@gmail.com](mailto:patchthriftshop@gmail.com) or like them on Facebook at SCSC Patch Thrift Shop for updates on daily sales and newest displays, or visit [www.StuttgartSpousesClub.org](http://www.StuttgartSpousesClub.org).

# Guide to supervise your child: USAREUR Child Supervision Policy

Parents of children with an identified attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, behavioral problems, developmental delay, impulsivity, psychiatric problem or other physically or emotionally disabling condition that could inhibit their children's ability to make appropriate choices should not give those children the degree of self-management and responsibility described in this policy

## May be left alone at home less than 2 hours

- Newborn – age 9: No
- Ages 10 – 11: Yes, with ready access to an adult supervisor
- Ages 12 – 17: Yes

## May be left alone at home for more than 2 hours

- Newborn – age 4: No
- Ages 5 – 6: No. At age 6 may walk to and from school
- Ages 7 – 9: No. May walk to and

from school

- Ages 10 – 14: Yes, with ready access to an adult supervisor, no more than 6 hours
- Ages 15 – 17: Yes

## May be left alone overnight

- Newborn – age 14: No
- Ages 15 – Age 17: Age 15 with access to local adult supervision/ sponsor; ages 16 – 17 may be left alone not to exceed five consecutive days. Parents must designate an official adult point of contact who will make daily face-to-face contact.

## May be Left Outside Unattended (to include playing)

- Newborn – age 4: No

- Ages 5 – 9: Yes; playground or yard with immediate access (visual sight or hearing distance) to adult supervision
- Age 10 through 17: Yes

## May be left in vehicle unattended

- Newborn – age 6: No
- Ages 7 – 9: Yes, except in hot weather with keys removed and handbrake applied, 10 minutes adult within sight
- Ages 10 – 11: Yes, with keys removed and handbrake applied
- Ages 12 – 17: Yes

## May babysit siblings

- Newborn – age 10: No
- Age 11: Yes up to two hours\*

- Ages 12 – 14: Yes up to 3 hours max\*
- Ages 15 – 17: Yes\*

## May babysit others

- Newborn – age 10: No
- Age 11: Yes, may babysit only siblings or close family friends for up to two hours
- Ages 12 – 17: Yes\*

\*Refer to country-specific guidance available at the Army Community Service, Family Advocacy Program. It is highly recommended that youth wishing to babysit siblings or others complete the Red Cross Babysitters Course.

Questions? Call Family Advocacy Program at DSN 590-1616 or civ. 06371-9464-1616.

To read the full policy, visit [www.stuttgart.army.mil/pdf/policies/ChildSupervision.pdf](http://www.stuttgart.army.mil/pdf/policies/ChildSupervision.pdf)

# Where to get connected to Wi-Fi on post

## USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs Office

Wi-Fi and/or computers is available for community use at all of the commissaries and the following locations:



### Panzer

#### Kaserne:

- USO (Bldg. 2915)
- Army Community Service (computer work stations only)
- Galaxy Bowling and Entertainment Center and Irish Pub
- Panzer Hotel
- Starbucks (inside the Main Exchange)

### Patch Barracks:

- Library
- Java Café
- Patch Community Club
- BOSS/Warrior Zone (inside the Swabian Special Events Center, lower level)

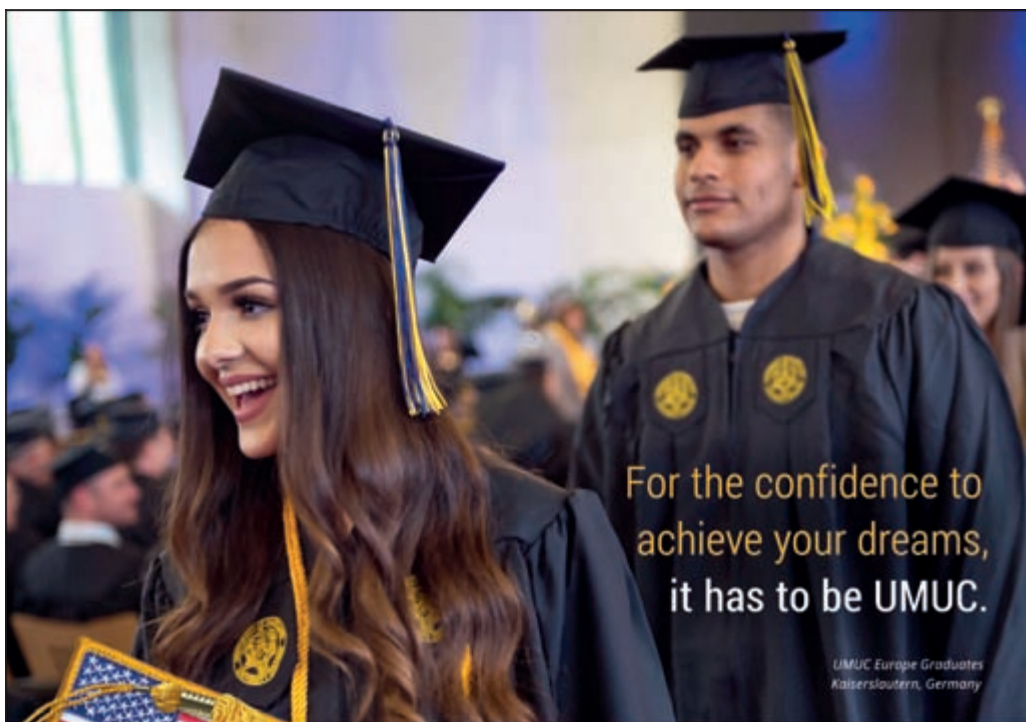
### Kelley Barracks:

- Broadway Café (inside Kelley Theater)
- Kelley Hotel

### Robinson Barracks:

- Library

(Editor's Note: The content of this article is for informational sharing purposes only; no endorsement is implied.)



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